

Under His Shadow

by Bill McLeod

Bill McLeod's sermon 'Under His Shadow' explores the beauty of Christ and the importance of intimate fellowship with Him in the life of a believer.

Duration: 36:14

Scripture: Isaiah 32:2, Isaiah 33:20

Topics: "Protection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a scenario of a blind man crossing the street and emphasizes the importance of having love and compassion for others. The speaker challenges the idea that love is solely based on feelings and highlights the need for action and genuine care for those in need. The sermon encourages listeners to seek a close relationship with God and allow His love to transform their lives, making them a shining example to others. The speaker also mentions the significance of spending time with God and prioritizing Him in our busy lives, reminding listeners that we are called to be a reflection of God's love in the world.

Transcript

Psalms Solomon chapter 2. Bible scholars have always recognized the Song of Solomon as being a love song between Christ, the bridegroom, and the church, the bride. I mention this because C.S. Lewis didn't believe that. He, matter of fact, he had very flaky notions about the inspiration of the Bible, in case you didn't know that.

He did not believe in inerrancy, and some books he didn't think should be in the Bible at all, and this was one of them. How wrong I think he was in that respect. I'm not criticizing him, just want you to know that not everybody looked at it this way.

The Song of Solomon. I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. I think Jesus Christ is speaking here.

He's talking about himself. The rose has a beautiful fragrance, right? Do you know that in deserts they have found a tiny rose, it's so small you can't see it. It takes a magnifying glass to see it, and it's so absolutely perfect, so gorgeous, that if they knew how to grow this rose to the size of the roses we know, the other roses will be looked at like a cabbage in comparison.

And so to see Jesus as the rose of Sharon, you have to have different eyes. Paul prayed in Ephesians 1 that the eyes of our understanding might be enlightened. We need to have that.

He's the rose of Sharon. In 2nd Corinthians chapter 1, the Apostle Paul said, thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Christ and makes manifest the fragrance of his knowledge by us in every place. That is what God is doing through his people.

The sweet perfume of Christ is on every Christian, or should be. And we spread that wherever we go, unconsciously sometimes. But God is doing that through us.

But he's the rose of Sharon, a fragrance from his life. And by the way, if you take and crush the petals of a rose, the smell is stronger. And when Jesus died on the cross, something happened that has been smelt around the world, the perfume of his life.

In John 1, I used to wonder what it meant when it said in John 1 that Jesus Christ was the true light that lights every man that comes into the world. And I said to myself, what about the people who've never heard the gospel? How does it enlighten them? Well, Jesus Christ, because of who he is, what he stood for, has lifted the entire world, even apart from the gospel. It's a different world since Christ came.

You might say it's more violent today. Well, it may be in some countries, and it is certainly very violent today. But that doesn't detract what I odor from the power of the perfume and the light that comes from Christ, because men today are sinning in the face of light.

And that's their problem. Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. He that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they're wrought in God.

But he that does evil hates the light. He can't put it out, but he hates it. And he'll never come to the light, lest his deeds should be discovered for what they really are, rebellion against God.

There's a verse in John that's often, I think, misunderstood. It's a verse that says the Holy Spirit will not speak of himself. And that's interpreted to mean the Holy Spirit will never speak about himself.

But that's not what it's saying. You can only make it say that if you take it out of the context. You know what the context is? He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.

So what he was really saying was this. He will never speak from himself. What God the Father gives him, he'll speak.

And only that. That's what it's saying. Now it goes on to say, Jesus said, he shall glorify me.

True enough. If the Holy Spirit never speaks about himself, why did he speak about himself 350 times in the Bible? Isn't it 18 times in the eighth chapter of Romans? You know that Jesus used exactly the same phrase, he said, I have not spoken of myself. What? Christ never spoke about himself.

He spoke about himself thousands of times, hundreds of times in the Old Testament, the prophetic scriptures, and thousands of times in historical accounts in the New Testament, and beyond that. And again, look at it in the context. I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak.

So he never spoke from himself. And he never worked from himself. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing.

So he's the rose of Sharon. Jesus is. Thank God that somehow I smell that perfume at the age of 22, and my life was revolutionized forever.

And the lily of the valleys, the lily is a beautiful, to me it's a very, very beautiful flower. And Christ is the lily of the valleys. It's not a contradiction, but in Psalm 45, addressing Christ, it says, thou art the fairest.

Well, in the Song of Songs, it says he's the fairest of ten thousand. In Psalm 45, it talks about him being the fairest of the sons of men. But in Isaiah 53, it says he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground.

He has no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. Jesus Christ, remember, was a representative man. That's why he wasn't a handsome man, because the average person is not really handsome.

As a root out of a dry ground and a tender plant, he wasn't a big, strong, physical specimen at all. Moses prayed in Psalm 91, let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. And so we sing, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

And we want that, don't we? In Ezekiel 16, God reminded Israel that she was beautiful because he had put his comeliness upon her. It was from God. And Jesus Christ is the lily of the valleys, the beautiful one, known in the history of the world.

Who has been like him, or could be like him? None. Even Gandhi, when he was the head philosopher and leader of the nation of India, he based all his teachings on the Sermon on the Mount. He did not believe Jesus was the Son of God.

That was unfortunate. But he based all his teaching, because he said it was the greatest teaching that had ever come into the world. He felt so sad he didn't press on to find Christ for himself.

So we are to be beautiful people. It's got nothing to do with the way you fix your hair, or the kind of clothes you wear. It's not that.

Beautiful people, representing Jesus, ambassadors for Christ. For God makes, remember, the sweet fragrance of his knowledge by us in every place. In every place.

That's God's program. It goes a lot better by retail than by wholesale. Wholesale is preaching from the pulpit, you know.

Retail is one-to-one. And so we must always be very much aware of the fact that God is using us and speaking through us. When David took over the throne, back in those days, and there's some evidence of that in the historical scriptures, the Old Testament, when the king took over, the first thing he did was kill all those who could possibly be considered adversaries, or opponents, or claimants to the throne.

When David became king after Saul died, he said, are there any left of the house of Saul? And someone told him about Mephibosheth, who'd been dropped by his nurse and was lame in his feet. He lived in Lodabar, and David sent for him. And I can just imagine Mephibosheth shaking, because he knows what this means.

Most of them did it this way. And when he came before David, what did David say? Mephibosheth, don't be afraid. Fear not.

The guy was just shaking from head to foot. I didn't give you the complete statement. David said, are there any left of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him? And so David became host to Mephibosheth as long as he lived.

He said, you'll always eat bread under my table. And he gave him all the lands that had pertained to his father Saul, in spite of the fact that for seven years or more, David had been running and hiding in the wilderness, living from hand to mouth, because of Saul. You can see the grace of God in David in this respect, in a wonderful way.

And God wants to do the same thing through you and me. People don't know that God is love unless they see it in a Christian somewhere. Right? You know how we operate? People think that love is a feeling, you know.

Let me suppose a scenario. You're walking down the sidewalk, and you see a blind man crossing the street. He gets halfway across, the lights are going to change, and he gets confused, and he turns.

Now he's walking towards a car, and the car blows its horn. He gets more confused, and he runs this way. And you say to yourself, man, you know, I should rush out there and help that fellow, but I don't have that love feeling in my heart, you know.

I just don't have that love feeling. And so the guy tries again, and guys are blowing their horns, the light changes, and traffic starts to move. And again, hey man, I should go, but I don't have that love feeling, you know.

And all of a sudden, the guy runs in front of a car, and he's killed. And the Christian says, well, I could have helped him, but you know, I didn't have that love feeling. And I say to myself, what nonsense.

It's not how you feel. It's who you are. For God wants you to be.

As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. You compare the love of Christ to the highest form of human love you've ever heard about. It's like comparing a thorn to a lily.

And in Romans 5, Paul says, when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a good man would some die, but he said, perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He goes on to say, being now justified by his blood, much more we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if we were reconciled to God by the deaths of the Son, if we were reconciled through Christ, how much more, he says, will we, by his death, how much more will be reconciled by his life.

So we're saved, it says, by the life of Christ, even more than by the death of Christ, in Romans 5. But of course both are essential to that. And so, perhaps somebody would die for a good man, but God's love goes far beyond that. He died for a world filled with rebels, wicked, lost, blasphemers, godless people.

There is none good, Christ said, except one, and that's God. They say of a certain person, he's a good man, but he's not a Christian. No, he's not really a good man.

Well, we have to be balanced here, too, of course. And Paul said that we are to acknowledge every good thing that is in us in Jesus Christ. If there's anything good in you or me, it was put there by God.

It's not natural. It was put there, I say, by God. We have to acknowledge that.

As I live among thorns, so was my love among the daughters. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto what? The end. And what was the end? Death on a cross.

People, and it wasn't just the physical aspect of his death. It was a spiritual thing that happened. When God made Christ to be sin for us, he who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

God is of purer eyes than to behold evil. He couldn't look at his son hanging on the cross because his son had been made sin on our behalf. And when Christ cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? All his disciples forsook him and fled.

He never had anybody standing with him. He could understand that and accept that. But God forsook him for our sakes on a cross.

I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Even at death of the cross, for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, despising the shame. For our sakes, I sat down under his shadow with great delight.

Now we're thinking about having fellowship with Jesus Christ. Somebody said, we don't. The average Christian doesn't really have fellowship with Christ.

He has fellowship with other Christians about Christ. Think it through. God is faithful by whom you were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ.

That which we have seen and heard, we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship was with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And dear people, there has to be those times when there's nobody else around, and you're totally alone with your God, and you spend moments, and perhaps you spend hours, gazing by faith into his face, fellowshiping with God. Moses was called a man of God because 80 days on the mount were not enough.

His cup was never full. He wanted more. I sat down under his shadow.

In eastern countries, shadow is so important because it gets so hot. In India one time, it was 105 above, and I said to one of the nationals, I said, my, it's hot. No, he said, this isn't hot.

He said, we only have three temperatures in India, hot, hotter, and hottest. And I said, well, it's 105, what's hottest like? He said, 125 Fahrenheit. I said, what do you do when it gets that hot? He said, we try and find a rock or a slab of cement and lay down on it and hope you survive.

I was in a building one time, it was 125 above. You could hardly breathe. You had to have your mouth open the whole time.

The sweat just poured off me. So in Isaiah 32, there's a wonderful prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ. A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, as a cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a thirsty place, as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

And that's Jesus. There's a wind blowing you can't control, hiding Christ. I flee unto thee to hide me, David wrote in the Psalms, you know.

There's no place to run to but to God. There is a water in a dry place. Think of Isaiah 33.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

But there the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallows shift past thereby, as rivers of water Jesus is to his children. You know, Israel in the wilderness, they didn't go around with a willow, wishing for water. Do you know how they found it? They sang, spring up, oh well.

And then the nobles dug with their staves because they expected the water would come, and there it was, a river. Enough for Israel and all the beasts they had. They drank of that spiritual rock that went with them, and that rock was Christ.

We read in the New Testament. That rock was Christ. 1 Corinthians chapter 10.

Rivers of water. A Christian should never be thirsty if he knows how to go to Christ. If a thirst is there, he said, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

He that believes on me as the scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. This he spoke of the spirit which they that believe in him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because the Jesus was not yet glorified. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

As rivers of water in a thirsty place, and then as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He get on the shady side of the rock, can be a hundred degrees above, it'll be cool there. And he's the shadow of a great rock.

Have we learned to hide in him? Spurgeon didn't believe much in deeper life conferences. He said, this produces people of a hothouse variety. He said, we have it all in Christ.

We have it all in Christ. You are complete in him. Who is the head of all principality and power.

You are complete. And the Greek there says, you are made full. The trees of the Lord are full of sap.

The words of sap are not the original Hebrew. They were put in by the translators. The trees of the Lord are full.

Isaiah 61 says, we are trees, the planting of the Lord. That he should be glorified. The river of God is full of water, it says.

Why is yours empty? Why is mine empty? Go to Christ. He brought me. He brought me to the banqueting house.

The marginal reading says that the Hebrew language says, he brought me to the house of wine. Maybe the translators changed that so that Christians would not become social drinkers, I don't know. But anyway, what it says is, he brought me to the house of wine.

Wine is a symbol of the spirit of God. Jesus Christ is the only one that can introduce you and me to the spirit of God. Pentecost was a Jesus Christ happening.

He said, I will send another comforter. I will send him to you. And so in Acts chapter 2 it says, Peter said, therefore being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this Pentecost.

What you now see and hear. Now, he had done this in embryo form in John chapter 20 after the resurrection. When he breathed on his disciples and said, receive you the Holy Ghost.

That was a very pale picture of what was to happen on the day of Pentecost when the resurrected Christ breathed from heaven on that upper room where the twelve were. There's evidence here by the way that it was not on the 120, only on the twelve. And I won't go into that now.

If you want to ask me about it, we'll talk about it later on. He breathed from heaven. There was a rushing, mighty wind.

Christ did that. And you cannot divorce the Holy Spirit from Jesus Christ, which some are trying to do apparently. I won't mention any names.

If I did, you'd know exactly who I'm talking about in one of his books. He constantly calls the Holy Spirit, it, it, it came. It did this.

It did that. He has shed forth this, which you now see and know. If you want to be filled, if I want to be filled with the Spirit of God, it has to come.

He has to come. He has to come through Christ. And so my relationship with Jesus Christ is the important thing, the compelling factor in this whole matter.

And when you're right with Christ, if you're right with Christ, you'll be right with your wife. Right? And right with your husband. And right with your kids.

I counseled once the lady, and she said, if becoming a Christian means I have to be like my husband, count me out. That was 35 or 40 years ago. They haven't even lived together for years.

She told me, she said, he's got such a vicious temper, I've left the house for as long as two and three days. I didn't dare stay there. I was afraid he might kill me.

But he claimed to be born again. He phoned me a few weeks ago and he was drunk. Claims he's a Christian.

Deceived. Totally deceived. I think.

You know what one of the things he did? He made all the family get up, his wife and all his kids, early every morning and take a cold shower. So long winter. He forced them to do it.

He wasn't crazy. He held down a good job. But there's something drastically wrong.

There was certainly no sweet perfume coming from his life to anybody. He didn't know Christ. And we can't change unless we know Christ.

For he's the one that does it. He took me by the hand and brought me to the house of wine. You want to be filled with God's spirit and people today.

It says in Daniel, speaking of the last times, the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. It's a day for exploits. It's a day for Christians to be powerful in God.

Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Be strong in the Lord. One of the three things Paul prayed for in Ephesians chapter 1 was that we might know the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe.

What do we know of the power of God in our own life? To us who believe. Most of us who sound asleep in this area were praying for God to use other people. We're praying for other people to know the power of God.

We're praying for revival in other churches. But we're not thinking in terms of our own life being revolutionized by the power of God. And only Christ can do that.

You can't bypass Christ and get to the Holy Spirit. It's totally impossible. He sent the Holy Spirit on that day.

That's one of the reasons why the Holy Spirit is sometimes called the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of Jesus. You can't, I say, divorce the one from the other. The rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys, no love like his.

I sat down under his shadow with gladness. In Galatians 5.22, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

You can't have vital fellowship with Jesus Christ while these things happening in your life. He'll do it. He'll work it in your heart.

He'll change you. He'll change me. We all with an unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Oh goodness and righteousness and truth, does that bless your heart? I was thinking of those three words earlier today and they blessed my soul again. Goodness, righteousness, there's so much that's evil and bad and so much unrighteousness in our world and our leaders are often the worst offenders. And truth, what is truth? Pilate said.

Zechariah said we're to be lovers of peace and truth. Are you a lover of the Scripture of truth as Daniel put it? I hope so. His fruit was sweet to my taste.

And then you know when you get alone with Christ and fellowship with Jesus Christ you become oblivious to time. An hour goes by, two hours goes by, perhaps even longer. Sometimes you sing.

David said I will sing unto the Lord and he will never complain. I learn about your voice. I will sing unto the Lord.

Ever do that? I should. Tell him you love him? People say it's embarrassing to speak that way. Oh really? It's embarrassing to tell God you love him? Well, love him because he first loved us.

Is that reason enough? He has declared his love for me, shouldn't I declare my love for him? I think I should. And I'll sweetly accept that. I don't know when the tears are flowing, I think Spurgeon said that tears are liquid prayers.

And God puts all our tears in a bottle it says. I don't know why, but he puts them in a bottle. It means that not one of your tears falls on the ground.

Not even one of them. He catches every one of them in a bottle of his. He heals the brokenhearted Isaiah 61 says.

He gives us the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that we might be called, trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that him might be glorified. I sat down under his shadow. If you had the opportunity to leap with a head of state let's say in six of the largest countries of the world and you were privileged to spend a half an hour with the presidents or the kings of six great nations would you take it on? Well, of course you would.

You'd mortgage your house so you could brag the rest of your life, you know. I've talked with all you did. Jesus Christ is king of kings and lord of lords.

We can talk to him every day and sometimes days go by we don't have any time. We're too busy. I heard Dr. Richard Ellsworth Day 50 years ago lecturing on Phinney and he said, we say we're too busy to spend time with God.

We're not too busy, we're just too buzzy. Can't make time for God. Because, like a lady said, I'm always, I can't pray longer than five minutes.

I'm prayed out in five minutes. I said, think of your very best friend. She said, yeah, I've got her in my mind.

I said, are you two talked out in five minutes? She said, well, we can talk for two hours and we're only started. I said, so you're telling me that God is some kind of a dumbbell? He's less interesting than this friend of yours? Is that what you're telling me? Well, not exactly. So people, let's sit down under his shadow from day to day with great delight and ask him to produce those fruits in our life and ask him to make us a sweet fragrance wherever we go.

So people will see there's something different about this person. They sense it. Sometimes they come and even ask you.

We had that happen near terminal down in South America, in Brazil. A fellow came and asked us why we were so quiet when everybody else was screaming at the flight agent because we missed our flight. He couldn't understand it.

He came to inquire. We had a reason. And we should have a reason as Christian people.

The Lord has said that's all. Let's pray.

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