

A New Creature

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of being a new creature in Christ, highlighting reconciliation, God's righteousness, and the necessity of growth in faith.

Duration: 1:02:27

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:6, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 6:17

Topics: "Born Again"

Description

In this sermon, Paul emphasizes the importance of being wholehearted in our faith. He refers to the command of God to let there be light in our hearts, which is the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul acknowledges that it may be difficult to believe this truth, especially when we focus on the things that are seen in the physical world. However, he encourages believers to cleanse themselves from filthiness and not to be motivated by fear, but rather by a desire for genuine separation and holiness. Ultimately, Paul teaches that we should not look at the things that are seen, but instead focus on the spiritual reality and truths of God's Word.

Transcript

Shall we turn to scriptures, beloved, in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians? Chapter 5, the well-known verse. Of course, there are lots of well-known verses here, but probably the best-known of the lot. Verse 17, 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God.

Who has reconciled us to himself. Now then, beloved, it is perfectly obvious that God never thought, he never conceived any idea of reconciling us to himself, without we should be totally new creatures. And with this whole idea is that from that moment everything should be of God.

That's the kind of reconciliation. See, it says this, that if any man, doesn't matter who he is, be in Christ, he's a new creature. Now if he's not a new creature, he's not in Christ.

That's obvious. If he's still an old creature, he's not outside of him. I mean, he's outside of him.

If anyone, doesn't matter who it is, you see me, now my case is peculiar. I'm afraid it isn't, friend. It's just ordinary.

Plain, banal, and it's of the first birth, and of the first life. It's not peculiar. There really was only ever one peculiar person in the sense of being totally different in this world, and it was Jesus.

And he came in, and this is it. And if anybody, doesn't matter who it is, is in Christ, he's a new creature. It doesn't say from that moment he will strive his manful best to be a new creature.

It says he is. And either he is or he isn't. If he isn't, then he's outside of Christ.

If he is, he's in. Marvellous, isn't it? Well, this is how we know. I mean, wouldn't it be stupid of God not to have given us this kind of position, so that we would understand so completely.

And it says, really, if I understand these words at all, this is the way we know. He's reconciled us to himself. And this reconciliation to himself could only be by one person, one way, and that is that you cease to be the person you've been.

This you can't be reconciled to. That's total. You cease to be the person you've been.

This is the reconciliation. And that you begin to be a new creature entirely, and that's marvellous. And everything's of God.

Of course, it eliminates everything there, and you never grumble anymore, you see. Because everything's of God. And before that, you think everything's of the devil, and you say so.

When you're coming through the sort of painful process, when you're so dead that you don't know whether it's of the devil or of man or of God. And then you get to a place where if you're not careful, you're saying, well, the devil did this, the devil did that, the devil did the other, the devil did something else. Devil consciousness.

God consciousness. I'm in Christ. Christ was vividly conscious of his father all the time, you see.

And everything's of God. Bit marvellous. Tony and Mary are going away.

It's all of God. This is going away. Hallelujah.

Everything's of God. Hallelujah. You say, do you want him to lose them? No, no, we're not going to lose them.

They're only going away. This is their whole position. Everything is of God.

He's reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. Now, the purpose of this, beloved, is that it's not just that we're of God in itself, I say, thinking of God, but it's God in Christ. Did you notice that? That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

This is a precious thing, isn't it? And I am of God in Christ. Amen. And I'm a new creature.

Now, the basis, beloved, of the new creation and being a new creature is the last phrase in the chapter. The righteousness of God. It isn't whether you feel happy or whether you feel sad.

It isn't whether you feel joyful or whether you feel miserable. You see? The basis of this great new creation is I am made the righteousness of God in him. It's true, you know, when old Wesley has a singing, the most impossible of all was that I from sin should cease.

That's the most impossible thing that God's ever accomplished, to make me to cease from sin and to become God's righteousness. Made the righteousness of God in him. But you see, the righteousness of God in him was so wonderful, if you see God's righteousness in Christ.

Did you ever note God's righteousness in Christ? It wasn't that stiff, legalistic, I'm better than thou and this harsh, this and forceful there. The righteousness of God in Christ is a righteousness clothed with glorious, loving personality, gentle manners, honourable behaviour, gorgeous, wonderful. So that thousands left their homes and followed him at first glance, but when they realised what the righteousness really was, they left him.

You see, but this great attractiveness of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. Now I've not been made the righteousness of God in heaven, or the righteousness of God in the law, or the righteousness of God in history, or what you want. Although it's all consistent really, we haven't got time to work it out this morning.

I've been made the righteousness of God in Christ. Amen. That's how he reconciled me to him.

And that's how he brought about this miracle that I should want to be a new creature. I don't just want to be a new creature because I've recognised how terribly sinful and wicked I am, but because I've seen the righteousness of God in Christ. You see, it's not a forbidding righteousness, it's an alluring righteousness.

It's something that's been clothed in human personality in such a way as to make me feel ashamed of myself every time I'm not like him. That's right. And in everything in which I'm not like him, it's this kind of righteousness.

Oh, what a beautiful and glorious thing that is, beloved. You see, as God was saying to us a little earlier, I sort of became imbued with it in verse 21. He hath made him sin.

Wasn't that gracious of God? God made him sin for us. It's glorious, isn't it? Just for me, for my sake, he made Jesus sin. Miracle.

Absolute miracle. For me, for my sake, he did that. Hallelujah.

But it wasn't just pity, it was in order that I might be made God's righteousness. That I might be made God's righteousness. Hallelujah.

Now, you see, beloved, that leaves us, everyone, without any kind of an excuse. I don't say we're people trying to find excuses or make them this morning. And that's why he goes on and says, We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vain.

Now, it's this grace that we're talking about. You'll notice that, when you read through your scriptures, at times you'll see this kind of thing. That, let me take, say, Romans 5. Quote, we'll look at that.

We won't look at it anyway, we know it so well. It says that we have entrance into this grace wherein we stand. And you will find, if you look back, he's particularizing grace.

In fact, grace is so vast that if we just say grace, we can lose ourselves in the tremendous unparalleled dimensions of it, you see. So, at times, God, like a searchlight, spotting on an object, says, it's this. This particular grace, you see.

Grace is so wonderful and so full that we sometimes have to sectionalize it or analyze it or do something like that, so that we can get our eye on a particular facet of it. And this is what he's talking about. This particular grace wherein we stand.

In Christ we're a new creature. Absolutely. Think of this.

Amen. It's not just that I've had my sins forgiven. Marvelous.

In Christ, I've made God's righteousness. Think of that. And, you see, here we are.

And in this Corinthian letter, this is the salvation he's talking about. For he said, I have heard thee in a time accepted. In the day of salvation have I succored thee.

Behold, now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. With this kind of salvation.

That's the thing you've got to see. I mean, there'll be people preaching on this verse tonight in gospel texts. But it's this kind of salvation.

Whereas I was once sin, Jesus was made sin. Whereas I was unrighteous, now I'm made righteous. Oh, glory.

And in this context, I am now an ambassador for Christ. Oh, amen. And when God commits unto us the word of reconciliation, it isn't come unto Jesus by any means under any conditions.

It's upon this condition. That if you're in Christ, you're absolutely a new creature. These are the terms.

If you still want the old, don't talk about being in Christ. This is really what he's talking about. If you still are aching, longing, yearning for the old, then you're not in Christ.

The guarantee of God, and bless God, the guarantee of God is this. That in him everything is. If I'm really in Christ, then I should know the life of Christ.

I must do. If you were in me, you'd know what it was like to be in me. That's right.

Isn't it this? This is the sort of complaint you people have. You know, the meat-miner says, Ah, well, of course you don't understand. I mean, I'm me.

I'm particular. I'm peculiar. Nobody understands what's going on in here.

And this, of course, is the essence of self-pity, which is deadly. It'll kill you. Self-pity will.

Or the boastful, egotistical approach. Oh, what's in me? I'm better than anybody else. It's funny how it all happens.

But there it is. That's how twisted we all are. But the glory of it is, beloved, there's an essence of truth in it that nobody quite knows what it's like to be in me.

Except me. Sometimes I don't understand it myself. But here, then, is the reality of it, beloved, that if we're in Christ, we're in Christ.

See? How wonderful that is. And we're now in there to understand what his life is. Amen.

To be able to move in it. And glory in it. That's what it is.

It's not following Christ in the sense in which they used to follow Christ when he walked about on the earth. It's being in Christ. This is largely the difference between the Gospels and the Epistles.

Which is mainly the difference between good Christian religiosity and really being born again. And being in Christ. And when we're in him, this is the glory of it.

Oh, amen. A new creature altogether. Lovely.

You know, when parents have children, and we had three in our family, you know, everything changes. You've got a new little personality coming to the home, and my word, don't you know it, and everybody turns on whether it's slept, or whether it screams, or whether it sleeps from five till ten, or two to six, or something like that. You see, everybody knows.

And you know, oh, it's got a little temper of its own. It's got a little this, it's got a little that, and it gets a big this and a big that. And it grows up, and everybody's changed because of the introduction of a new little creature.

That's right. Amen. This is how we're to be a new creature, that everything changes.

Everything's got to change. It's no good you thinking. Things can go on as they did.

Praise God. You see, you've got to be the righteousness of God in him. Oh, the righteousness of God in him.

How it suffered. Didn't it? Indignity, mockery, unbelief, rough treatment, crucifixion, hallelujah, that suited God's purposes best. The righteousness of God in Christ.

Have you got the righteousness of God in Christ? If you haven't, if somebody comes and puffs at you, you'll fall over. That's right. Well, he doesn't believe me, they don't believe me.

So what do you do next? And this whole thing is moving on into the full development and life of Jesus Christ. Oh, to be like this. And growth and development is very wonderful.

It's today. I go down the sixth chapter, moving on to what God has for us. And he says this.

If you're really going to be a new creature in Christ, one thing you must not be, he doesn't put it this way, in verse 12, you must not be straightened in your own bowels. Now that's a deadly serious thing. I mean, people bring their children to me to get prayed for if they've got tummy trouble in their bowels.

They do, this is honest, they do. I've prayed for many. They say, oh, Mr. I won't use all the things they describe, it's pretty dreadful.

They're straightened in their bowels. And you know what the child will do if it's straightened in its bowels, it'll die. You can call it any number of names you want to.

So you see, you haven't got to be straightened in your bowels, beloved, because basically, that's where your life springs from. Hallelujah. Oh, this glorious, no thanks.

Bless your heart. God has blessed me, I couldn't be a long-winded preacher, but he's blessed me with very good lubrication in my mouth and throat. I don't usually dry up.

Well, you know what I mean. But the whole beauty of it, beloved, is that it's here where your life really springs from. If there's no response down in here to God, there's something wrong.

This is where your response has got to be. It's got to be these indescribable things. It doesn't matter at the moment whether you can explain it.

That's where the activity of God takes place. I deal with people that have demons at times. I mean, at times I deal with people that have demons.

And one of the questions I ask them is, do you have movement in here? Do you have movement in this region? Yeah. That's right. The presence of a spirit is always felt.

And God is a spirit. You can't remain dead. We learn lessons from the nether world, beloved.

When he comes, he's in us. He's active. I remember a famous old elder that I've mentioned many times.

And he used to say, if he comes, he won't be a dummy in you. He's alive. And there's a response.

And he quickens the response. This God, the presence of an evil spirit, is a foreign body. And it can sort of move without you being moved.

But when the Holy Ghost comes, he comes because he's the natural in the supernatural world. He's come to fill us with the life of Christ. He's come to combine with our spirits.

He hasn't come to move about, and it's like a lump of lead hopping down and across here. But he's come to be in us, beloved. And you know the trouble with the Corinthians, as Paul wrote to them, was this.

They'd had mighty experiences of God, but they were straightened in their own bowels. Now, these men and these women, I want you to see this, beloved, and understand this perfectly. They'd come from the bowels of the apostle.

They'd been born of God. That's why he said, you're not straightened in us. Hallelujah.

In these men, in their hearts, they've got large thoughts for these people. This life had got to be developed. When God brings you to new life, beloved, he's got marvellous thoughts for you.

Not something to swell your head so that you think that you're the next apostle coming up on the horizon, or something like that. Not that kind of thing. But he's got great, great desires for you.

Amen. The largeness of it all. You're not straightened in God, and you're not straightened in those that have preached the gospel to you, if they've preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, as Peter tells us in his first epistle.

Then, beloved, there are no horizons. There aren't any, anywhere. Growth, beloved, is completely immeasurable.

Well, I was talking only the other day about a certain person, and we were discussing this man, and this is the thing that we were saying. When it came to having his IQ tested, he'd got such a tremendous IQ it

couldn't be tested. They had no standards by which to judge it.

How about there? He's not one of us. He is one of us, but he's not here this morning. You know what I mean.

He's one of the children of God. You see, immeasurable. There are certain standards that you set, and it's by these that you measure people.

That's right, isn't it? But in God, the only standard, if you like, is Jesus. There are no limits, beloved, no limits. And it all depends upon how far you are prepared to go.

It all depends on that. Praise the name of the Lord. How far are you prepared to go? For that will depend on how great you grow.

Lord, I'm going through with you. Amen. What a marvelous thing.

You mustn't be straightened in your own bowels. Shut up down there. But absolutely liberated within.

Everything set free in you. No fears, no restrictions. No limits.

No uncertainties. Nothing. This is what I've discovered.

I've discovered in my own little life that this word, uncertainty, never enters in. The thought of uncertainty is gone. That's one of the things God banishes when you become a new creature.

He banishes all that. You see, that's all part of the negative life. That's all part of the old.

So, so, so, so certain. Or, you know, when Jesus came into the world, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not. But a body is thou prepared.

I've come to do thy will, O God. That was that. You see, no uncertainty at all.

Completely sure. Amen. Why should there be all this wrestling with people to get them out of their sort of introversions, uncertainties, inhibitions, limitations.

Oh Lord, I'm a worm, sort of thing. When you read about Jacob, God said, Thou worm Jacob, I'll make thee to thrash mountains. Have you ever imagined a worm thrashing a mountain? That's preposterous, I mean, it's laughable.

Yes, hallelujah. Well, laugh at yourself then. Laugh at yourself.

And see that the stupidities in which we bind ourselves up, beloved, are because we are not new creatures in Christ. I come into Christ utterly. Praise the name of the Lord.

And at that moment, I abandon to every single thing. It's because people cling to the old. They cling to this, they cling to family, they cling to all the things, everything.

Instead of letting everything go. Never seen what the birth is. When Jesus Christ was born on earth, he let go everything.

Didn't he? Now, did he or did he not, when Jesus was born of Mary, he let go everything. He was plunged into a new family. Utterly.

You see. Think of it. The trouble is with us that we just don't.

Jesus Christ was plunged into a, and he opened his eyes in a stable. Stable. Think of it.

Do you think, have you ever let it dawn on you? When he first opened his eyes as a little infant, he, where am I? Excuse me. Putting it like that, but it's right. So new.

It's a wonder the shock didn't kill him then, isn't it? Have you had a shock like that? Hope it killed you. But we don't, we cling to everything else. We cling to this.

We want to bring the old things in, the old cultures, the old ways of going on. Jesus never brought in the old ways of going on or the formal ways of going on. Never brought it in.

He never did that. Came in new. I tell you the wonder of this, blessed you, but it's never properly dawned on people.

They've never really seen it. So they're struggling for the next 45 years to get rid of what they might think would be set in sins or something like this. Or trying to get themselves crucified with Christ and they spend excruciating decades trying to get there.

It's right, they do. Hallelujah. Because they never really believe.

People don't believe. I sat and talked with somebody last week. I'm not going to be too pointed about this because most of you know where I've been.

But I sat and talked with this person. It's no good, you know perfectly well I'm not dead, this person says. You know perfectly well I'm not crucified with Christ.

It's no good me trying to sit here and say that I am because you know I'm not. I said I don't know any other thought. Amen.

Amen. I know what the Bible says. The Bible says you are crucified with Christ and don't you lie against the truth.

But, but, I said I'm sorry. I don't believe you. But it's obvious you see and we kept on like that five or ten minutes.

Giving all the proofs to show that you're not crucified. So God's a liar. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

You won't let yourself believe it, that's all. Because you're looking at all the proofs that point to the opposite, you see. Listen, it's in this same epistle.

Oh, I'm so sorry we haven't got a long time. Now if we were at Roar I would be allowed two hours and they'd put lunch off until I'd stopped. But here we... You've got to see, beloved, how the thing works.

It's in 2 Corinthians and it's in the fourth chapter. Listen. We look not at the things which are seen.

How about that? Verse 18. We don't look at the things which are seen. How about that? It is wonderful.

It's a wonderful book. God wrote it. We don't look at the things which are seen.

It comes from the pen and the heart of a man that knew the truth. You do not look at the things which are seen. That doesn't mean to say that you keep on blah, blah, blah and act and live like a sinner.

I'm not talking about that at all. I'm meaning the genuine people. I'm not meaning the hypocrites or people that are so blinded by their own professions that they can't see or hear anything but themselves.

And they're away in some realm of fantasy. I don't mean that at all. I'm meaning absolute reality.

We don't look at the things which are seen. Until you've learned that, beloved, you've not learned one of the basic things of the spiritual life. We don't look at the things that are seen.

Glory be to God. And then all the things at which you would look and then get a reaction from them and a negative reaction, you find that they're all doing what it says here that these things are working for us. See? Two Corinthians.

They're working for us. Verse 17. They're working for us.

Amen. They're working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Now I'm only speaking to those, of course, who've been made the righteousness of God in here.

Everything works glory then. Now you can see where it's working glory because it shines on your face. Because glory is something you feel.

You know that, don't you? You say, how does it feel? I say, oh, glorious. You see? Glory is something you feel. See? Marvelous, isn't it? These then are the new basic states touching emotion and everything in us.

Desire, will, everything. We're new creatures. You see, we don't react as we used to because we don't think as we used to because we are not disposed to things and thinking of things as we used to be.

We've got a new disposition. It's righteousness. It's our new basic state.

I'm disposed to be righteous to everybody and in everything. Hallelujah. Now, this isn't something you think of.

If you've got to sit down and think of everything, you know, you've got a new problem. Now, first I must think it's righteous. First, you work it out and work it out and work it out and work it out.

And by that, it's all mental. Everything's coming from the mind. And everybody wants to work from the mind because they're afraid to let the spirit rise spontaneously.

The spirit's got to rise spontaneously. This is a glorious new release. It really is the life.

And it's how you immediately react. It's how you spontaneously move that is the real revelation of who and what you are. That's it.

Now, the Lord wants us to move on and let's go back into the sixth chapter and you will see this in verse 11, just before verse 12, where we looked about the straightened bowels. He says, Our heart is enlarged. In verse 11.

Amen. Our heart's enlarged. Now, that would be dangerous in a physical condition.

You ought not to feel glory because that would make you too excited. If you've got an enlarged heart, you might die. You see.

That's right, isn't it? But I tell you that keeps everything regulated. It's the glory and the bowels free and the heart large is related to righteousness, which I'm basically made. Everything's all right.

It's when it gets unrelated to righteousness. This is the big thing. If I'm going to glory, I'm going to glory righteously.

If I'm going to be free in my bowels and can flow anywhere to anybody at any time, it's got to be in righteousness. That's a big thing, isn't it? If my heart's enlarged and I can love and love and love and take in anybody and take on anybody and not set certain limits, if that's right, if it's related to righteousness, okay. When God loved me, He loved me righteously.

Amen. And He loved me to be able to deal with my quirks and my twists and my sins. That's the glorious righteousness of God.

He overcame everything. The basis of overcoming is not buying a tambourine and shouting glory, glory, glory. The basis of overcoming is being righteous.

That's why Jesus Christ overcame death and sin, because He was righteous. I never heard any glory shouts on the tree. Be careful.

Don't let's be carried away into the things that only exist up here. We've got to have our feet down on the things down here below. Amen.

Amen. Righteousness. I move in this realm of reality then.

Amen. Amen. If you've got a great big heart and there's nothing wrong with your bowels and you're basically right in yourself, you can then open your mouth.

Why? It says our mouth's open to you. Our heart's enlarged. You see, you can then open your mouth.

It's very safe. If you start opening your mouth before your heart's big enough, beloved, you'll be in real trouble. All let the world come, you see.

Somebody comes up that's got some trouble or a bit filthy and says, Oh, I can't have them. I've had them here a week. It's too long.

I've got to kick them out. Oh, I can't put up with this. Because your mouth's opened larger than your heart.

It's a tragedy. It's very common. It's called Pentecostal.

I don't mean that. You know what I mean? You know what I mean by that, I hope. You get your mouth open wide and you're shouting, shouting, shouting.

Paul said, My mouth's open wide because my heart's enlarged. You're not straightening us. You're straightening your own bowels.

Mind you, it's a big thing to be able to put people's bowels right. I mean that. Amen.

The Lord wants us to be in this thing absolutely wholeheartedly, completely full. Ah. You see, the meanwhile, beloved, all this has got to be done in light.

I go back to the fourth chapter for that. God, verse six, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. This is how he began his creation.

He first said, let there be light. You're going to be a new creature. He says, let there be light.

See? Shine in our hearts. Give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Isn't that a marvellous thing? Our new light, beloved, the God's commander to shine in our hearts, is the face of Jesus Christ.

And you know, beloved, this is the shining one that came back from the dead. Wonderful. In our hearts.

Is that all right? Is that there all right? Now this is the light you've got to walk in. Some people think that the light they walk in is something that's all shining all round. This is the light that John speaks of, that you've got to walk in.

If we walk in the light, what of? The glorious shining countenance of Christ in your heart. You walk in that light, now you're in fellowship. Now there's no sin.

Now there's nothing. The light, the glory of the Lord. This is all done on such basic intimacy.

Jesus said this in the world, he said, my father's always with me. They said, where's your father? He said, he's always with me. Yeah? He walked in the light.

He was the light. Well, of course he was, because he walked in it. Nobody's life if they don't walk in it.

As a man, now I'm talking about, Jesus walked in it. I always do the things that please him, he said. He sort of, if for instance he was to look in here and he saw a frown across his father's face in there, he wouldn't do it.

That's a relationship. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Marvelous.

That's what made him say, you are the light of the world. We walk in this. God does everything here.

Our hearts are right. Everything's right. Is it? Everything right? That's how God has determined it shall be with each one of us.

Sixth chapter. Verse 16. The temple of the living God.

You are the temple of the living God. Amen. Isn't that lovely? Walking about in the air like this.

Temple of the living God. What joyous communion you have, beloved. What a wonder of life you have when you're walking about in your temple of the living God.

It's this, beloved, that is absolutely essential for us to live this life that Jesus wants us to live. You see, you know what goes on in the temple. I mean, if you take here this morning, why it was so wonderful that Bernard didn't even bother to play it and then stopped.

Because of what's going on inside here. Well, now, what's going on inside you if you're a temple? The singing, the glory, the manifestation. It's this that keeps us free from all the trouble that's out there outside.

The wickedness is the awfulness, the sins. It isn't this rigidity of come ye out from among them, be ye separate. Bang, bang, bang, in that sense.

Though it's written in the Bible. But this is our separation. This is our separation.

This is what makes us so different. Then we found out, we don't have any concord with them, do we? Silly. We don't have any fellowship with them, do we? We don't, do we? We have nothing in common with them because that's what fellowship really is.

Everything in common. Amen. That's lovely, isn't it? And we're separate from them.

Don't touch the unclean thing. And here, beloved, we find the glory of being a real child of God, a new creature. I'll be a father to you.

I'll be a father to you. Amen. Conditions, then, for the real enjoyment of sonship and for the real enjoyment of my father, him being a father to me.

Amen. Walking with this, I am a temple of the living God. My father is my living God.

Amen. My light is the living savior, the glory of his countenance. Hallelujah.

The foundation of my life is his righteousness. My heart is all enlarged. My bowels are flowing free.

That's where the river runs from and through. Out of my bowels, belly, whatever word you want to use according to whether you're cultured or not. They all flow out of us.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Isn't this a marvelous thing, beloved? You've got to be free like this, basically free. You've got to be absolutely liberated.

You've got to be. You've got no choice in the matter. You're either in or you're out.

You can opt out if you want. You've simply got to be this. That's what you've got to be.

And there's no dodging about How far are you ready to go? You'll be my sons. You'll be my daughters. I'll live in them.

I'll walk in them. Isn't that glorious? I'll walk in you, he says. Walk, walk, walk.

I think this is lovely. Now this is how the Lord is going to visit our country. On your two feet.

I'll walk in them, he said. On your two feet. Lovely, isn't it? Then we'll finish, I think, in the next chapter.

And he says this. Having therefore put these promises, dearly beloved, let's cleanse ourselves, shall we, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. In my opinion, that should have been the last verse of chapter 6, but still, there it is.

Then we'll get a fresh start and receive us. You see, you've got to go on. And perfect holiness.

Cleanse from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. Oh, isn't it lovely? Clean, enlightened, enlarged. Enjoying it.

Glorious. Freeing. No restrictions.

Can you imagine anything better? Isn't this what a human being should be? This is our heritage. We're new creatures. Amen.

Not just trying to accommodate ourselves to walk in this life, but the next. We're new creatures in Jesus Christ. Now, then, beloved, we are going on to live this life.

Aren't we? Amen. Hallelujah. I said obviously, I said earlier that you'd be an ambassador for Jesus Christ.

Now, you're perfecting holiness. You understand what perfecting holiness is, don't you? That means that you are holy, but now you've got to perfect your holiness. You are holy.

Now you've got to perfect that holiness. All right, are you ready to do that? Now, keep yourself clean. You'll never be holy if you're not clean.

You understand that? Spirit, soul and body, keep yourself clean. Mind, spirit, affections, keep yourself clean. That's what you've got to do.

Cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit. There's a lot of filthiness in the flesh and a lot of filthiness in the spirit too. Filthiness of spirit comes out in language, innuendos, half-truths, hidden meanings.

Spirits passing themselves on through the soul realm by conversation. Glances, attitudes, a grunt or a laugh. All these things can do it.

You've got to cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. We live in a world of spirit as well as a world of flesh. And it's the spirit that ruins the flesh.

So, you've got to see that your spirit is right. It was a spirit that ruined the flesh in the beginning. His name was Satan, erstwhile Lucifer.

He ruined the flesh. Now, we've got to be in this place. You've especially got to watch your aesthetic tastes.

The things you see with your eye, the thing you listen to with your ears, the thing you read with your eyes. These are the things. You've got to watch yourself in this aesthetic world.

But I tell you, you've got to cleanse yourself from all filthiness. If your motive, beloved, for separation is cleansing yourself from all filthiness and not fear, you're not in legal bondage. If your motive for breaking concord here or fellowship there or oneness in this family or with that set is to cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh, not as a prig and a superior humbug, but walking in the glory of the light of the Lord, then, beloved, everything's right and nothing's a hardship.

And everything's simple. And there are no legalistic laws. And no particular denominational codes.

It's what your motives are. You're an ambassador. Now, you will know, my beloved brothers and sisters, that an ambassador, I suppose many of you have heard sermons about this, but an ambassador always

carries a letter.

If you like, you want to call it an epistle. All right, then. Chapter 3. You are our epistle.

Verse 2. Known and read of all men, forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us. Written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God. I want to tell you something, beloved.

You can talk about Christ and you can do all sorts of things, but Christ takes on a particular hue, he takes on a particular form, he takes on a particular potency according to the vessel through whom he comes. It's Christ ministered by me. Christ ministered by you.

And this will either distort men's vision of Christ and their understanding, or else it will give them truth. And this is the explanation of so much, the distorted Christ they got hold of in the beginning. Which means a distorted gospel.

Amen. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Christ ministered by me. You are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us. Oh, amen.

Christ ministered by me. What kind of a Christ am I ministering to you this morning? But, you see, it just doesn't go on in me talking. It goes on most through me living.

An ambassador always carries an epistle from their sovereign. Always. Christ ministered by me.

You see, hallelujah. You've not only got to be there in person, you've got to have the writing too. Both.

Are we there? Christ ministered by me. Oh, hallelujah. What sort of a Christ are you ministering? Are you ministering a Christ that dabbles in sin? Because I'm afraid that's an antichrist.

Are you ministering a Christ that sort of is always hidden somewhere beneath your personality? I mean, if they stay with you long enough, they'll see them somewhere. But the first thing that strikes them is you. You're noisy, loud, or quiet and introspective.

It doesn't make any difference much. You see, and you're the thing that hits them. You're tastes, you're this, you're that, you're something else.

Or is it Christ? And underneath Christ, you. Amen. Christ ministered by us.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Christ of the enlarged heart. Christ of the free-flowing spirit.

Christ whose bowels are absolutely open to us. Christ of the shining face. Christ of the glory.

Christ of righteousness. Hallelujah. You could go on.

It's all here in this epistle. I hope I've whetted your appetite. Go through and find it.

It's all there. You see? You see? God in Christ. Amen.

Christ in me. Christ through me. So the Lord wants to have us moving, beloved, in these realms all the time.

All the time. I want the whole Christ to be manifested in me. I want to go on in perfect holiness in the fear of God.

I do really want to cleanse myself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. I want everything out of my home that might give the wrong idea or impression. I want only Christ.

That's what I want. And this I'll promise you that the older you get, if you don't fall into sloppy self-indulgence midway, you see, and you keep going, the older you get, the more and more you'll want everything purged out of all your cognizances, out of all recognition, out of all your world. You'll want it all purged, purged, purged.

Yes, you will. That's what you're bound for. Amen.

So may the Lord enable us to live and go quietly on, open our mouths wide at the right time. Whatever you do, don't open your mouth wider than your heart, or else you'll be in trouble. You'll be in trouble.

This is what Paul means when he says, according to the measure of faith. It's the same thing. People start praying and prophesying and talking about things that it's not according to the measure of faith.

They've heard a sermon somewhere, or they've read a book, or a bright idea has struck them, and they start talking right out of their own measure of faith. Everybody says, that was a wonderful work, wasn't it? But you see, we didn't get saved by a wonderful word, we got saved by a wonderful work. We got saved by a wonderful heart.

We got saved by a glorious man, who always talked according to what he intended to do, and what he had a heart to do. He talked about your sins be forgiven you, he had a heart to go and bleed on the cross. You see, he never talked beyond what his heart was.

And when I mean his heart, I don't mean just mere desires, what he'd like to do. He had these likes. But beyond and deeper than his likes, there lay a disposition of righteousness.

And he'd come to do it. A sheer determination to go through. And therefore, everything came right in his life.

He took it all in his stride. Amen. Now, if I've talked from this angle to you this morning, and you've lately begun in these things, well that's alright, you'll grow up into them.

Just keep going, as the Lord gives it to you, to just grow and grow and grow, and develop in this way of the Lord. And it will lead you right through to all fullness. Amen.

Let's pray, shall we?

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