

# Dirt In, Life Out, Light Off

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The Christian life is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and becoming a Christian is an act of faith that occurs in a moment, while being a Christian is a process of faith that continues throughout our lives.*

**Duration:** 1:11:35

**Scripture:** Proverbs 20:27, Isaiah 64:6, Mark 7:20-23, John 14:6, Romans 3:23, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 4:17-18, Philippians 1:11, Colossians 1:27, Titus 3:5-6

**Topics:** "Redemption", "Spiritual Life"

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## Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes that the Christian life is not merely a religion but a relationship with Jesus Christ, who is both the way to God and the life that sustains believers. He explains that while becoming a Christian is a momentary crisis of faith, being a Christian is an ongoing process of growth and transformation through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Thomas illustrates this with the analogy of a lamp, which requires both cleansing (dirt out) and power (life in) to function properly, symbolizing the need for redemption and regeneration in the believer's life. He stresses that Jesus came to restore humanity to its intended function by reintroducing life to those who are spiritually dead. Ultimately, the sermon calls for believers to recognize their need for both the redemptive work of Christ and the ongoing presence of His life within them.

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## Transcript

If you're joining us tonight for the first time, for the last two sessions I've been using a very simple diagram to illustrate the basic principles, the solid foundations of the Christian life. And remember the Christian life isn't a religion, the Christian life is a person. The one who said, I am the way, see my hands and my feet, that's the price I paid.

No man comes to God but by me. I'm the way. But I'm not just the way because you might accept me as the way and know that you can be reconciled to God because of what I have done.

I'm the life. Because you might be worrying, having come to me as the way and being reconciled to God, how you can now be the Christian you've become. So the Lord Jesus said, don't panic.

I'm not only the way, I'm the life. That's the truth. John 14, 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life.

The truth about the way, how to become a Christian. The truth about the life, how to be the Christian you've become. And you need both what he did because of what you've done.

You need who he is to take the place of what you are. That's the glorious simplicity of the good news gospel. For the simple reason he made us that way in the whole purpose of our Lord Jesus coming to this world is to restore us to that relationship as creatures of the creator that will make us functional.

It's only the life of the Lord Jesus in you that enables you to be in the process of time what through his death for you, you could become in the crisis of a moment. How long does it take to become a Christian? A split second. The moment your soul awakened by the Holy Spirit, convicted of your sin, you recognize you need exactly what God had in mind when he sent his son to die in your place and you say thank you.

In that moment of time you become a child of God. You don't deserve it. God never said you did.

But in that moment of time, you're accepted in the beloved for whose sake God will remember your sins no more. But that's only becoming a Christian. That isn't being a Christian.

That's just becoming one. Becoming is a crisis of faith. Being the Christian is a process, an attitude of faith.

And God is only interested in us if we're prepared to be what for his sake who died in our place, we're able to become. So it takes the life of the Lord Jesus in you to be in the process of time what because of his death for you, you could become in the crisis of a moment. One is an act of faith, the other is an attitude of faith.

One is a crisis and the other is a process. And in the process called growing in grace, we are in the process of being conformed to the image of God's Son. Until finally, in the consummation of the gospel, when we are truly evangelized, we shall be restored to image.

Once more become functional as those who, as a special creation of God on this planet, were intended by God to be the means whereby he who is invisible could become visible in terms of what we do and say and are. Paul, in writing to Timothy, calls this the mystery of godliness. But it's no longer a mystery.

It became an open secret in the person of the Lord Jesus, because he did exactly that. When he emptied himself, humbled himself, made himself of no reputation, though he was the creator, was willing to play the role of creature, though he was the God who made man, was prepared to become the kind of man that he as God intended man to be, for 33 years he revealed the glory. He made an invisible God visible, so that day or night, whether you looked at him from above, from beneath, from the side, from the back or the front, the Lord Jesus, by everything and anything he did, said and was, gave a perfect expression of the Father's mind, will and purpose.

In other words, if you wanted to know in the Lord Jesus what God was like, you didn't have to make an appointment. He didn't have to say, come round tomorrow afternoon at 2.30 and I'll be in position. You see, his life, 24 hours a day, was a revelation of the glory of God.

It was a movie in sound and color, without exception. That was his sinlessness, and we're going to talk a little bit about that tonight, because he's called the second man. And I mentioned this to you the other day, in the 15th chapter, the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the first Adam was made a living soul, he died, and we're going to remind ourselves about that this evening.

The last Adam, the Lord Jesus, came to be a quickening spirit, one who would raise the dead and restore life to the lifeless. Because, you see, the first Adam was made, created, alive, but he died, because he was stupid enough to believe the devil's lie that a man can be man without God, and God bowed to his choice, withdrew his presence, and left man godless, alienated from the life of God, dead in trespasses and sin. But the 47th verse of that 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians says, the first man was of the earth, earthy, he was created.

The second man, the only other real man that ever came to earth, was our Lord from heaven. But he wasn't created, he was born. That's why I told you the other day, he's the only real man who was ever born, because the only other real man was Adam, and he was created, he wasn't born.

So there's only one man who's been in this world who was really man, who was born, that's Jesus. Because everybody else who was born, as we discussed this morning, after Adam fell, was born dead, in trespasses and sins. And there's only one cure for death, life.

That's why the Lord Jesus said, I've come that you may have life. I've come to have exactly, I've come to give exactly what dead men need, life. Well, we've been illustrating this in a very simple way.

We're on the second of the transparencies. Here's man in normality. X, X is the world in which we live, this physical planet.

And those who have been to the other sessions will forgive me, it's for the sake of those who are here tonight, so that they can be caught up into the main train of our thinking. I just recapitulate for a moment or two, with a body in common with the vegetable kingdom, in common with the animal kingdom. But not only with a body, but in common with the animal kingdom, as opposed to the vegetable kingdom, a behavior mechanism, mind to think with, emotion to react with, will to decide with.

But not as in the animal kingdom, a behavior mechanism governed by instinct, a transistorized program. Man was uniquely created so that there should be not a rigid interlock between an instinctive thrust and an animal soul, but to be inhabited by God, the Creator, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, in the person of the Holy Spirit, indwelling the human spirit, by whose presence man was not only physically alive, like every other form of life on this planet, he was spiritually alive. But only because there was somebody living in somebody, God in the man.

Now, of course, the Lord Jesus demonstrated this, being born a human being, by constantly affirming the Father who lives in me, somebody living in somebody, because he came to be the kind of man that he has got created man to be. That's why he made himself wholly available to his Father, in mutual inter-availability. He offering his body, his soul, and his spirit to the Father as God, and the Father, through the Holy Spirit, offering himself as God to the Son as man.

Mutual inter-availability. Now, that is the relationship which man was created, magnificently demonstrated for 33 years by the Lord Jesus. True man.

Body, soul, and spirit. And the Holy Spirit indwelling the human spirit, so that he can gain access, but only with man's moral consent, because man was made to be a moral being, not transistorized like the animal kingdom. He could say yes, he could say no, because God is love, and the only thing that satisfies love is to be loved, and love cannot be compared.

So man, as a creature on this planet, was given the greatest liberty that was given to any creature on this planet. The right to adopt the disposition of his choice towards his maker. That was the incredible liberty that God gave to man, in his unchallengeable sovereignty.

God is totally sovereign, he can do anything he pleases at any time, and when he pleases, why he pleases, and what he pleases. But in his absolute sovereignty, he limited himself in the exercise of that sovereignty, so that in the creature called man, he could have a creature that could love God back. Because love cannot be compelled.

So that's how God created man. But he died. And this morning, we talked about death in its dual connotation.

Death occurring, and a state of death existing. And the two are quite different. For death to occur, life must be present.

In other words, a state of death can exist, where no death has occurred. Pick up a stone, and it's dead, but it didn't die. It's in a state of death, but death did not occur.

Death can only occur in the presence of pre-existent life. Only that which is alive can die. And God, you see, said to Adam, in the day that you eat thereof, by an act of disobedience, evidencing a new attitude of independence, in that day you'll die.

But man couldn't die without forfeiting life. He believed the devil's lie when the devil told him you will not die. Revealed the new disposition of independence by an act of disobedience, and forfeited life at that moment in time.

God said he would. In the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die. But the next morning, he got up and had his breakfast.

Physically, he didn't die until he was over 900 years of age. And yet God said, in the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die. So it's quite obvious, in that death to occur demands the forfeiture of pre-existent life, he forfeited a life other than physical life.

Because he didn't physical life until he was over 900 years of age. But that forfeiture of physical life was the inevitable by-product of the death that occurred when he fell. Which was not the forfeiture of physical life, but the forfeiture of the life of God, for whom man was created, to be inhabited by his maker, whose presence, as created within the creature, is indispensable to his function.

Because it was the presence of God in the person of the Holy Spirit that enabled man to be functional. For the role of the Holy Spirit within the human soul was that role that instinct plays in the animal. God himself, not instinct, somebody living in somebody, the creator within the creature, God in the man, somebody, was to teach his mind, somebody was to control his emotions, the love of God shed abroad in our heart's soul by the Holy Ghost.

And under the influence of a God-taught mind, under the influence of a God-controlled emotion, he would exercise his will to bring his body into action, so that by what he does and says is, he'll demonstrate that my mind is being taught by God, my emotions controlled by God, and my will directed by God, so when you look at me you see God behaving. That's how he made us. That's the divine logic.

That's why God is the hidden factor that is indispensable to a man's humanity. Take that hidden factor, God, out of man and he becomes dysfunctional. Just as if you were to take instinct out of the animal kingdom, the animal kingdom would become dysfunctional.

The inevitable consequence would be chaos, anarchy, and self-destruct. And that's precisely what's happening within the human community, a society of human beings who forfeited God. We are living in a lost world, and it was to remedy this situation that the Lord Jesus came.

And in that man, in the day that sin occurred and death occurred, for as by one man's sin entered into the world and death by sin, the forfeiture of life, for in the day that man believed the devil's lie, God withdrew the Holy Spirit from the human spirit, and man was left physically still alive, soulishly still active. He still had a mind to think with, emotion to react with, and a will to decide with. But his human spirit, or as we saw this morning, God's lamp.

Proverbs 20, verse 27. The spirit of man, the human spirit, is God's lamp. It demands oil to produce light, to be functional.

And oil in the Bible is always that which represents the life of God made available to man in the person of God the Holy Spirit. Oil. From the relentless consistency.

Anywhere old or New Testament, oil always speaks of the person, work, and office of God the Holy Spirit. Take oil out of a lamp, you've still got a lamp, but you don't have light. That's very simple.

That's exactly what happened when man fell. So in the day that he fell, God withdrew the Holy Spirit, there was no longer any oil in the lamp, a state of death. Physically alive, soulishly active, spiritually dead.

So that when death occurred, a state of death, lifelessness, godlessness, was introduced. So the state of death in which you and I are born, alienated from the life of God, Ephesians 4, 17 and 18. That state of death derived from man's fall when death occurred.

For as by one man, Adam, sin entered into the world and death occurred, death by sin, so that state of death passed upon all men. So that when the Lord Jesus came into this world, it was to raise the dead, to restore life to the lifeless. That is the gospel.

It has very little to do with getting people out of hell and into heaven, because man wasn't created to live in heaven, he was created to live on earth. The only reason why, when we're redeemed, we're going to live in heaven is that we've made such a mess of this place, and he's going to prepare a new place. And I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God has truly prepared for them that love him, and have been redeemed, and thereby qualified to enjoy that life, his life which is eternal, in the place that he's prepared.

But that's incidental. That's purely incidental. The purpose of redemption, the purpose of all that Christ did upon the cross, wasn't to change our destination, it was to change our character.

Not move us from A to B, out of hell into heaven, but to get God out of heaven into us. So that we might once more become functional by the presence of the creator within the creature. So death occurred, and a state of death was introduced, and Jesus came to lift us out of that state of death that occurred when Adam fell.

And remember, a state of death is lifelessness. If suddenly the fuse were to go, the cut out in the city, and there'd be no more power in these lamps, darkness would occur. A split second, that's all it would take for darkness to occur.

But the moment darkness occurred, we would be sitting here in a state of darkness. I wouldn't be able to see you, and you wouldn't be able to see me, that might be an advantage. But you see, the state of darkness would occur in the absence of light.

Darkness doesn't destroy light, it cannot, because darkness and light can't be mutually coexistent. Where there's light, there's no darkness. So darkness doesn't destroy light.

Something else can destroy light, a power cut, or I could take out a 3-8 revolver and shoot out all these bulbs. That might be just as effective, but that's what it would take for light, for darkness to occur. But the moment that occurred, we'd be sitting in a state of darkness.

In the same way, death doesn't destroy life, it cannot, because they cannot be mutually coexistent. Where there's life, there's no death. I could take the same 3-8 and shoot you between the eyes, that might do you not much good.

Death would occur, and from then on, a state of death would exist, and somebody would have to come, wrap you up, put you in a box, and bury you. Get the difference between death occurring, death existing, light forfeited, death, darkness occurring, darkness existing. Darkness doesn't destroy life.

Death doesn't destroy life. But life will destroy death. Light will destroy darkness.

That's why the Lord Jesus came. He came to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to life. First chapter, the second of Paul's two epistles to Timothy, verses 8, 9, and 10.

That's why the Lord Jesus came. He came to abolish death. How do you abolish death? By introducing life, just as you abolish darkness by introducing life.

But he didn't only abolish death by introducing life, he wanted to bring that life to light, so that it would become demonstrably obvious that death had been abolished, and life had been restored. Now, we're going to try and illustrate that in a moment. Death occurring, a state of death existing.

Now, we need also to know the two connotations of sin. On the one hand, sin is an attitude. On the other hand, sin is an activity.

And don't confuse the one for the other. As by one man, sin came into the world. That was an attitude.

And by virtue of that attitude, death by sin. What was the attitude? Well, a disposition that was introduced when man believed the devil's lie, whereby he was no longer dependent on God. Because the moment man believed that he was no longer dependent on God, that God, the Creator, was no longer indispensable to man the creature, he could become independent of God.

That's what happened when Adam fell. He believed the devil's lie, that he could be a man without God, so he was independent of God, and therefore could be disobedient to God. Now, the independence of God is sin as an attitude.

The moment he began to exercise that attitude of independence, sin, he was at liberty to be disobedient, and that was the act. So, one was an attitude, the other was an activity. So, man didn't fall when he took the proof.

That was an act. He fell when he believed the devil's lie and changed his mind about God. God now was no longer absolutely indispensable.

God, to him now, could be irrelevant. And because he was no longer dependent upon God's attitude, he could be disobedient to God's activity. Now, that's what we call sins, an activity that derives from an attitude.

Sin came in when man believed the devil's lie, and the activity derived from the new attitude of independence. So, that you're not a liar because you tell lies. It's only liars who tell lies.

When you tell a lie, you're simply advertising the fact that you're a liar, that's all. Stealing doesn't make you a thief. It's only a thief who steals.

When you steal, you simply advertise, I am a thief. A state of heart will produce the activity. Committing adultery doesn't make you an adulterer.

It's only adulterers who commit adultery. An adulterer may not yet have committed adultery, but he is still an adulterer. That's what enables him to commit adultery.

Committing murder doesn't make you a murderer. It's only murderers who commit murder. Let's get everything straight.

The activity derives from a disposition, an attitude. It's called in the Bible a hostile attitude of mind towards God. You'll find that in the Colossian epistle, chapter 1 and verse 21.

And I'll read it to you from the Amplified New Testament, which is very explicit. And of course, the epistle to the Colossians is addressed to those who have already become Christians, who've been raised from the dead, in whom death has been abolished by the reintroduction of life, in that they have received Christ as their Redeemer, have been reconciled to God, and God has sealed that transaction instantly, simultaneously in time, by the restoration to them of God the Holy Spirit. So bear in mind who's he talking to.

Not the lost, not the unconverted, not the unregenerate, not those who are just church members but have never been saved. Although you at one time were estranged and alienated from him, and of hostile attitude of mind. That's the characteristic of a person who hasn't yet been reconciled to God.

Alienated from him, and of hostile attitude of mind. That's the natural man, the animal man. How is that hostility of mind and alienation from God demonstrated? Well, it goes on to tell you, although you at one time were estranged and alienated from him, and of hostile attitude of mind in your wicked activities.

It's your wicked activities, sins, plural, that demonstrate the disposition, attitude, sin. Hostile. It's called the carnal mind.

A hostile attitude of mind is described, Romans chapter 8, remember, carnal mind. A fleshly mind. Let's just glance at that, Romans chapter 8. These are verses that I'm sure should be very, very familiar to you.

It's this hostile attitude of mind that makes it impossible for you to work for or earn your salvation. For what the law, verse 3 of chapter 8, what the law, the moral law that God gave to Moses, etched with the finger of God on tables of stone and given to him on Mount Sinai, which is absolutely perfect, Psalm 19 and verse 7, the law of the Lord is perfect, because it represents the minimal demand so that a holy God has the absolute right to make of a man who was created in God's image. When the law says don't steal, when the law says don't lie, when the law says don't commit adultery, that's not a set of rules and regulations that God introduced to make life difficult.

It simply represents the character of God, that's all. Because he made us in his own image and God says don't lie, why not? Everybody else does if they can get away with it. Very present help in time of trouble.

Why does God say don't lie? God says because you were created to reveal my character and I'm not a liar. And when God says don't steal, and you say why not? Most people do, if they can get away with that. Well God says because I created you to advertise deity and I'm not a thief.

God says don't commit adultery, why not? It's the end thing today, we've jettisoned the old taboos of the past. God says because you were created so that all creation could look at man and know what God was like and I'm not an adulterer. That's the law.

It simply tells us what kind of activity derives when God is behaving. And when God behaves, that's what the bible means by righteousness. It isn't you imitating God, it's God behaving, reproducing his character in terms of your activity.

That's righteousness. Righteousness is God behaving. But in order for him to behave in you and me, he's got to be there.

That's why you must be born again. If you're going to be enabled by his presence to be, what on the grounds of redemption, what the law could not do in fulfilling the demands of God's righteousness, in that it was weak through the flesh. That means because in the moment you and I were born, we inherited the fallen nature of a fallen atom, dominated by an alien agency called the carnal mind, a hostile attitude of mind.

And what the law cannot do in that it is weak through the flesh, God has done another way, sending his own son in the likeness of, not as sinful as, but in the likeness of sinful men God condemned in his sinlessness, your sin and mine. Verse 5. They that are after the flesh, carnally minded, do mind the things of the flesh, all that satisfies the appetite of a fallen nature. Greed, lust, pride, hate, drunkenness, drug addiction, jealousy.

They that are after the flesh, dominated by that alien agency that invaded Mansoul in the day that he fell and forfeited the life of God, they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. It's only they who are after the spirit, who mind, have an appetite for the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded, dominated by that hostile attitude toward God, to be carnally minded, that's death.

To be spiritually minded, that's life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, it's hostile. The carnal mind repudiates God's demands.

When God says do, the carnal mind says I won't. When God says don't, the carnal mind says I will. It's a hostile state of mind.

That's why the law cannot fulfill in us the righteousness demanded by God because of the weakness of the flesh. Because every demand that God legitimately makes upon us is immediately repudiated, rejected, and opposed by that hostile attitude of mind. Well, that hostile attitude of mind, of course, produces a quality of life that only tells lies about God's character, as some of us discussed this morning.

Because sin comprehends all the lies that you and I, by what we do say and are, tell about God. By the way we behave, by the look on our face, the tone of our voice, the way we drive our cars. Do you come by car? How many lies did you tell about God? There's no place where Christians tell more lies about God than behind the steering wheel.

You see, by the way you drive, other people, whoever they may be, should know who's steering and who's got his foot on the accelerator. If you're a Christian, it's Christ. It's the only way that he can bring immortality and life to life, by the way we behave.

So what was the consequence when man fell, the Holy Spirit was withdrawn, and an alien agency, which is a hostile state of mind towards God, was introduced to abuse, misuse and prostitute a man's humanity? What was the inevitable consequence? Well, let's just treat it very quickly. Turn to Genesis and chapter 6. It says in verse 5, let's just read that, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, mind, was only evil continually. It's interesting because in the earlier chapters of the book of Genesis, which tells us how God created us and the whole universe, it says God said and God saw.

He's the logos. When he spoke, the things that are came out of the things that were not. God spoke and God saw.

Then man fell, and after that it always says God saw and God said. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The imagination of his heart, his mind, his disposition.

In the eighth chapter of the same book of Genesis, verse 21, the latter part of that 21st verse in the eighth chapter of Genesis, the imagination of man's heart, what he cherishes, mills around in his mind, because it derives from a hostile attitude towards his maker. The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Look at the 51st Psalm, and this is the confession of a man who forgot to remember that God is bigger than bears and bigger than lions and bigger than giants, David, who learned a principle but let God do it as a little kid and then forgot to remember.

And as we were reminded earlier this week, he got on the roof of a building and watched a half-naked girl bathing, and that stirred the imagination of his mind, but he got back on track because this is his confession. Against thee, verse 4, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, because you see he committed murder by proxy, sending that woman's husband to the front line of a battle so he'd get killed, so that he could cover up his adultery. Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity. In sin did my mother concede me. Now, it doesn't mean that he was conceived by an act of sin on the part of his mother, he simply means that when I was conceived and fashioned in my mother's womb and born, I inherited the fallen attitude, nature of a fallen Adam.

And what I did when I committed adultery and covered it up by committing murder, what I did derived from a state of mind, a disposition. The act derived from the attitude. I took time off from God, pretended he didn't exist.

I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother concede me. Verse 10, creating me a clean heart, O God, renew a right spirit within me. Deliver me, verse 14, from blood guiltiness of God.

Thou God of my salvation, and my tongue then shall sing aloud of thy salvation. For the sacrifices of God, verse 17, are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. O God, thou wilt not despise.

And he found forgiveness. He was restored, cleansed and back on track. But you recognize that what he did resulted from what he was, an attitude toward God that produced an activity of hostility toward God, wickedness from his mother's womb.

Verse 58, chapter 58, or the 58th Psalm. Verse 3, the wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

We inherit by natural animal birth the fallen nature of a fallen animal. We inherit the attitude. And we're sinners then, not because we sin, we sin because we're sinners.

This was the inevitable consequence. That's why in the 14th Psalm, just look at that for a moment. The Lord looked down from heaven, verse 2, upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, if there were any that did seek God.

But they are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy. And there is none that doeth good. No, not one.

That's the natural man in his unregenerate lost condition. You see, the quaint idea is that some people think, well, I don't lie, I'm good. I don't steal, I'm good.

What's good about not lying? Did God create you to lie? Who made you in his own image? What's good about not stealing? Did God create you to be a thief? Well, I've never committed adultery, I've never murdered anybody. Well, what's good about that? Did God commit you to engage in promiscuous sex? Did God create you to commit murder? What's good about not doing? What's wrong when God made us in his own image? That's normality. Isaiah 64 And verse 6. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Because you see, we evaluate our righteousness in terms of somebody else. There's always one way in which you can prove yourself good, and that's compare yourself with somebody who's worse. And that's an old trick.

The problem is, of course, that you will be evaluated by God, not by comparison with somebody else, save himself. Because you were created in his image to reveal his glory. Romans 3, 23, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

That's why God isn't measuring how good you are, he's not measuring how bad you are. He simply measures how good you're not. Because sin is the margin of difference between what he is and you are.

That's the glory of God in whose image you and I were made. We are all as an unclean thing, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have

taken us away. An activity that derives from an attitude.

Jeremiah 17, verse 9. Jeremiah 17, verse 9, the heart, mind, emotion, and will, the behavior mechanism of a fallen creature, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? Now, this is the problem the Lord Jesus came to deal with. A fallen race of fallen men, who in forfeiting the Holy Spirit, forfeited the hidden factor that alone makes man functional.

Because it takes God to be a man. Because you and I, uniquely created, were to be governed by God. But in the day that man fell, he died.

For God withdrew his Holy Spirit from the human spirit. And we were dominated by this alien agency called the carnal mind, which is enmity, hostile to God. So, see how the Lord Jesus describes this in the seventh chapter of Mark's Gospel.

Mark in chapter 7. Because the Pharisees, for the hypocrites they were, complained because the Lord Jesus didn't comply with their ceremonial rituals that had long since taken the place of reality. So, he said in verse 20 of the seventh chapter of Mark, that which cometh out of the man, that defiles the man. Not just eating with unwashed hands, that goes in.

Jesus said it's what comes out that defiles a man. That which cometh out of the man, that defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, all these things come from within.

That, he says, is what defiles a man. It's the dirty water that comes from a dirty well. And you see, religion often only offers you a new rope and a clean bucket.

But if you take from religion what may be offered you, you see, as a clean new rope and bucket, and put it in the dirty well, do you know what you'll draw? Dirty water. That's why the law, which is perfect, makes nothing perfect. That's why you and I can't fulfill the law because of the weakness of the flesh.

There's a dirty well. And whether you've got a new rope or a clean bucket, that's all you'll draw. It's what comes out of the hearts of men.

Until a miracle takes place whereby, by the exceeding great and precious promises, 2 Peter chapters 1 and 3 and 4, we become partakers of the divine nature. Then you can put the bucket down and his behavior will be what you draw, God behaving. And that's righteousness.

Let me illustrate this in a very simple way. Supposing you were in the dark, sitting in your room, you switch the light on because you want to write a letter or read a book, and then suddenly the light goes out again. You say, it's funny, maybe I didn't switch it on properly.

So you grope around in the dark, find the switch, switch it on and off, and still nothing happens. So it's obviously not the switch. So you think, well, maybe it's a fuse.

But you notice that under the door that goes into the next room, there's a strip of light and, surprise, you know that's on the same circuit. If you're not quite sure about that, call your wife and ask her to put a thumb in the socket. Anyway, you're reasonably assured that it's on the same circuit, so there's power in the line.

In other words, there's power enough and despair. So it isn't the switch and it isn't the fuse, so quite obviously it must be the bulb itself. So you unscrew the bulb from the socket and you take it into the room where there's light and look at it, and you find, to your amazement, there's nothing wrong with it.

It's complete, it's whole. You say, that's funny, the switch is on, the current is flowing, there's light in the line, the bulb is unbroken but there's no light. Then you examine the bulb a little more closely and you discover there's dirt at the point of contact.

So now you realize what's happened. The dirt came in, the light went out, and the light went off. Now that's what happened when man fell.

The dirt came in as by one man's sin entered into the world. At the moment sin entered into the world, the Holy Spirit was withdrawn and the light went out, and immediately man was left dysfunctional, morally incompetent to fulfill the office which he was created to reveal God's righteousness. So the dirt came in, the light went out, and the light went on, and the whole human race was plunged into the abysmal darkness and destitution of spiritual death.

Makes a very simple illustration. You see, it's got a bulb, it's got a body, that's on the outside, as you and I've got a body, and if you wait long enough it usually takes on that shape. But on the inside, and this is clear glass, mostly they're opaque, something that you can't see on the inside, there's a behavior mechanism, a filament.

So it's got a body and a soul. But even though this lamp has a body and a soul, the bulb and the filament, it doesn't produce light, because it was never created to produce light, any more than man was created to produce righteousness. This lamp wasn't created to produce light, it was created to become the recipient of that which it must receive and upon which it must depend, if ever it is to be functional.

Electricity. No bulb has ever been manufactured that will produce light. I wish there were.

You wouldn't have to pay your utilities. A lamp is only functional when it's prepared to recognize I cannot, only it can, for which I was created, therefore I must receive the electric current and allow it in me and through me to produce light, because for me that is impossible. Well, if the bulb was created to receive that upon which it must depend so that it, working in and through the bulb, can produce light, to which the bulb is not to be congratulated, but the electric current, there must be a point at which that which produces light is received.

That's the point of contact. That's the human spirit. So you've got a body, a soul, and a spirit.

But when the dirt comes in, the light goes out and the light goes on. Well, what would you do about it? Well, you'd say I'd get some sandpaper or emery paper and I'd clean the dirt off. Well, right.

Now you've got a clean lamp. The dirt is out. That in the Bible is called redemption.

Dirt out. The precious shed blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. A lot of people don't understand what that means.

It's a fact, but they can't explain it. We'll seek to talk about that maybe tomorrow. But the purpose of the shed blood of Jesus Christ was to cleanse us from sin and reconcile us to a holy God so that he being made sin for us, we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Dirt out. It's called redemption. So now you've got a redeemed lamp.

It's got dirt out. So you take it into your dark room and you place your nice clean lamp on the desk and you say now I've got a clean lamp. That's fine.

I can go on writing my letter or reading my book. Would that be an adequate remedy for your dilemma? Well, of course it wouldn't. How much more light would you get from a clean lamp on the desk than from a dirty one in the socket? How much more light? Well, none.

You'd get light from neither. That's why to come to Jesus simply to have your sins forgiven is hopelessly inadequate in restoring a man to function. All it would do is make you fit for heaven as a forgiven sinner, but he is useless in heaven as you were on earth.

And God isn't particularly interested in having a whole bunch of people who've been redeemed fit for heaven, but they're still totally unfit as they were on earth to fulfill the functions which they were made. God has no joy in having a whole bunch of redeemed people in heaven in bundles of tin being dusted by angels with DDT once a week who are as unfunctional, dysfunctional, there as they were on earth. That would be stupid.

The whole purpose of the Lord Jesus' coming was to restore man to function. The only way you could do that with your redeemed lamp with the dirt out would be to screw it back into the socket and let the light in. That in the Bible is called regeneration, new birth.

It's described in Titus chapter 3 verses 5 and 6, not by any works of righteousness which you have done. In other words, it isn't by polishing the bulb that you can make it shine. As many are taught, they've got to work their way to heaven, polish your image, draw upon the illimitable depths of your personality, and finally you'll be restored to function.

The only way you can get light is to screw it in. Redemption. Regeneration.

Not by any works of righteousness which we have done. According to God's mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, the renewing of God the Holy Spirit. The coming back of somebody to live in somebody.

Regeneration. Dirt out, life in. But the moment the dirt is out and the life is in, in this bulb the light would be on.

What would be the only evidence that the dirt was out and the life was in? That the light was on. That's called sanctification. That means the bulb then is once more being intelligently used for the intelligent purpose which it was intelligently made, because it is now in a position once more to receive that for which it was created, upon which it must depend if it is to fulfill the function for which it was made.

That's salvation in a nutshell. Christ died on the cross to redeem you, get the dirt out. He rose again from the dead on the day of Pentecost for the first time in all human history to come and re-inhabit the humanity of 120 men and women who were there at his command to receive life from on high.

And by virtue of what happened on the day of Pentecost, Christ came to take up residence within their redeemed humanity and became in them the source of life. Because Philippians chapter 1 verse 11, the fruits of righteousness, life and immortality coming to light, the fruits of righteousness are by Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1 11.

So he's the only one who coming to take up residence within your redeemed humanity because you've been cleansed in the blood he shed upon the cross, he's your only hope of being restored to glory. Colossians chapter 1 verse 27. Christ living in your heart, somebody living in somebody, your only hope of being restored to glory.

So you need what he did, the redemptive act, dirt out, but you need who he is in the power of his resurrection, life in, in order once more to fulfill the function for which you were created, reveal the glory. Well we're only going to spend just a moment or two now before we quit for tonight. How'd he do it? Well first of all the word the Logos, the Lord Jesus, was made flesh and dwelt among us.

He was born at Bethlehem, miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit. Had he been born as you and I were born, he would have been born in the condition in which you and I were born, he'd have been born dead. He neither could have died for himself nor anybody else.

That's why the virgin birth, the miraculous conception is absolutely imperative to our salvation. It isn't a theological debating point. Had Christ come the way that you and I were born, he too would have been born dead, but he wasn't.

He was conceived of the Holy Ghost. Passion in the borrowed womb of the virgin girl, so the angel Gabriel speaking to Mary said, therefore shall that holy thing that shall be born of thee be called the Son of God. It'll be a miraculous conception.

He said you will concede in your womb, and conception doesn't take place in the womb. It takes place in the fallopian tube. But you see this was a divine conception.

It was miraculous. It was a divine intervention. And so that little baby boy was born the Son of God.

And because he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, he was born not as you and I were born, uninhabited by God, inhabited only by sin. He was born uninhabited by sin, inhabited only by God. So that from the moment of conception where life begins, Luke chapter 4 verse 1, Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost.

And as I mentioned the other day, you can put that in different phraseology, Jesus being man as he is God created man to be full of the Holy Ghost. The fullness of the Spirit isn't a special blessing. It isn't some ecstatic experience.

It isn't something that happens after you have become a Christian. You can only become a Christian by being born of the Spirit. That's when you become a Christian, when you've received again the life of Jesus, because the sin has been taken out and the life has been put in.

Then you're alive again. So the Lord Jesus, conceived of the Holy Spirit, came to this world having emptied himself, humbled himself, made himself of no reputation, born a human being with a body just like yours and mine, with a soul just like yours and mine. In John chapter 12 he says, Father, how is my soul troubled? He was a human being, never ever less than God, but insisted for your sake and mine upon living on earth for 33 years as though he were never ever less than man, never ever more than man.

Isn't that incredible? He, never ever less than God, came into this world for 33 years to behave as though he were never ever more than man. As opposed to man in his fallen condition who is never ever more

than man and behaves as though he were never ever less than God. That's the difference.

That's humanism. Jesus, never ever less than God, behaves as though he were never ever more than man. The fallen race of fallen men behave though never ever more than man as though they were never ever less than God.

Their own humanism. So he received a body and a soul like yours and mine and a human spirit. That's why he said on the cross, now Father into your hands I commend my spirit.

In the fifth verse of the tenth chapter of the epistle of the Hebrews he says, thank you Father for giving me a body to offer. I've come, verse 7, to do your will. In other words, the Lord Jesus said, thank you for the body, Father, you've given for me to offer back to you.

Thank you for the soul, mind, emotion, and will that will enable me to behave, but only under the total control of the Holy Spirit, you Father, living in me within my human spirit and giving unchallenged access to my soul so that what I do is what you're doing, what I say is what you're saying, what I am is what you are, and others looking at me will see God behave. In other words, he was a real man. And as real man he was not only physically alive, soulishly active, but spiritually alive.

The only real man who was ever born. And when the Lord Jesus came, the only real man that was ever born, he demonstrated the innocence of a pre-fallen Adam. If you want to know how man was intended to behave, look at Jesus.

If ever there was a man on earth who knew how man should behave, it was Jesus, because he happened to be the God who made man. So for 33 years he demonstrated what he had in mind when Adam was first created. And it was in the sinlessness of that humanity, the Lord Jesus paid the price of our redemption to get the dirt out.

What happened when sin came in? The life went out, and man was left physically alive, soulishly active, spiritually dead. What happened to the Lord Jesus when he was made sin? Second Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21, last verse, God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He dubbed with all our guilt so that we might be dubbed with all his righteousness.

He simply took our place vicariously. Well, when he was made sin for us, the Father and the Holy Spirit had absolutely no alternative to withdraw their presence from him, as when Adam fell, Christ himself, the Father and the Holy Spirit, had no option but to withdraw their presence from Adam. So for those three awful hours of darkness, a man is hanging on a cross, God forsaken.

My God, why hast thou forsaken me? A rhetorical question because he knew exactly what was happening. He quoted the first verse of the 22nd Psalm. So the disciples skulking in the crowd who fled when the shepherd was smitten, as Jesus said they would, left him to die alone, he quoted aloud on the cross, look it up in Psalm 22 and you'll know what's happening.

But they didn't look it up, that's why they ran away. Ignorance of the Bible will always make you a coward. First verse, Psalm 22, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? If they'd looked it up, do you know what they'd have read? They look and stare upon me.

I can feel all my bones, the weight of my body is hanging. They pierced my hands, they pierced my feet. So how did David know that in the year 1087 BC, more than a millennium before Jesus Christ was born? How did David know they were going to pierce his hands and his feet? Because God writes history in advance.

You see, we look into the past and call it history, God looks into the future and calls it history because he's the eternal, timeless, present tense. That's why he knows the end from the beginning. That's why whom he did foreknow, he predestinates.

He didn't create Judas Iscariot to betray him, he knew that he would, because he's timeless. And so the Lord Jesus quoted that 22nd verse, the first verse of the 22nd Psalm, and amazingly enough in the same passage, you know, he said they cast lots upon my vesture, they'll gamble for my clothes. The four soldiers who crucified him gambled for the clothes the Lord Jesus wore.

A beautiful garment, they didn't want to split it. How did David know that? They look and stare upon me, they pierce my hands and my feet, they gamble for my clothes. So said Jesus from the cross, why don't you look it up, stupid? Then you'll know what's happening.

God forsaken, in those three agonizing hours of darkness, then something wonderful happened. Three hours later the Holy Spirit came back to the human spirit of the Lord Jesus, and he was alive again, but the price had been paid. How do we know? Because he cried, before he died physically, tetelestai, which means translated into English, paid in full.

It is finished, it's all over father, it's all over, I'm coming home. And that was before he died physically. How do we know it was all over? Because when he cried, finished, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom.

That which had barred man's access into the presence of a holy God, only the high priest, once a year on pain of death, was allowed so to do, as a shadow of the good thing to come. And as the high priest then, as a man, he constantly were replaced by virtue of death. But Jesus was our high priest up to the order of an eternal life.

He cried, finished, all over father. It was not till then, when it was all over, he died physically. Left that body, which they put in the tomb, and went to paradise.

But one of the thieves there, crucified with him, said, Lord remember me. And Jesus said, not tomorrow, not in two days, not in three days. Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.

So where was the Lord Jesus when he died physically? He wasn't in the tomb, his body was. He came back to that body, raised it from the dead, three days later. Walked around in it, and showed his disciples his hands and feet.

He didn't even see corruption. But he wasn't in that body while he was in the tomb. He was in paradise.

He said so. Thou shalt be today with me in paradise. Not heaven.

The place where the Old Testament saints were waiting for the seed promise in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom you've been hearing from Peter Macdonald. The fulfillment of the divine promise. The seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, born in the city of

Bethlehem, conceived of the Holy Ghost.

A little baby boy, God incarnate, lived the sinless life that qualified him to accomplish the redemptive death, so that paying the price, you and I might be cleansed, dirt out, so that risen from the dead, he being physically raised also from the dead, three days later, ascended to be with his father, so that on the day of Pentecost, the life that he forfeited, restored to him, might then be restored to you and to me, alive again. Dirt out, he took it away, bore our sins in his own body, on the tree. Restored to him, restored to us, life in, so that he might bring life and immortality to life, and we'd be restored to glory.

The glory that he revealed. For remember, he came to restore the glory. Before ever he could restore the glory, he had to relinquish the glory, and then reclaim it.

That's the gospel. Simple, isn't it? How do we enter into it? Just admit that we're in this condition, need exactly what the father sent him to do on the cross, so that we could pass from death to life. When you pass from death to life, resurrection has taken place, and that's what it means to be born again.

And because he lives, we live.

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