

Four Blessed Truths of Ministry

by Rolfe Barnard

A Christian is someone who spends their time beholding the glory of the Lord, and salvation comes when God works a miracle in them, turning the light on and dispelling darkness.

Duration: 42:42

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:18 - 4:1

Topics: "Ministry"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of being a Christian and spending time in the subconscious, which is more real than our conscious mind. The preacher emphasizes the importance of constantly looking at the glory of the Lord in our daily lives, even while performing mundane tasks. The passage from 2 Corinthians 3:18 is referenced, which states that as we behold the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image by the Spirit of the Lord. The preacher also highlights the ministry given to believers by God and how the light of the gospel shines in the hearts of people, leading them to salvation through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Open God's Word to 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Chapter 3. I want to begin reading tonight with the 18th verse of the 3rd chapter, and read down through the 7th verse of the 4th chapter. And tonight I'm not going to try to expound that whole passage of Scripture, but I do wish to pick out four things that we learn, or that we have to face, given in these eight verses. The last verse of the 3rd chapter reads like this, But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, something happens to us as we spend our time beholding the glory of the Lord.

We are kings into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, not as a burden laid upon us, not as some rules we have to observe, but as a wonderful, wonderful boon from a God of all mercy, he has given us a ministry. It is interesting to note that in the book of Ephesians, we are told of the fivefold ministry, the gifts of the ascended Lord, and they for the purpose of making good deacons, for the word translated perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry.

That word ministry is the alchemy. We are all to be good servants, good ministers, good deacons, all the members of God's church. And seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, what a blessed privilege it has been in my life that the Lord interfered, and I was being trained to become a lawyer, and

the Lord interfered and made me a Christian and helped me to share by coating my little end of the blanket, entering into this ministry.

It wasn't nice to me, to be so sweet to me, to change from being some fool lawyer, probably make a million dollars a year, and graduate me to wear as one of his children, and had a part with all of God's children in this blessed ministry. Of course, the ministry is about the glory of the Lord as compared to the glory under the law. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, and we have it, oh, are you glad of it.

How are you getting along, folks? Very good? Good. To the job the Lord has given us to do. Seeing therefore we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, and I like Mr. Moffitt's translation of the next three words, King James, we think not.

Mr. Moffitt said we never lose hope. Never lose hope. Never lose hope.

We never lose hope. I don't think it's pessimism to face facts. I think it's silliness to make out like everything's all right.

But there's a difference between trying to face facts and cry to God to show us the way and lead us and give us the key and pour out his spirit upon us and break our hearts. There's a difference in doing that and just throwing up your hands and quitting. And the child of God, if this ministry the Lord's given you and me to share together and you took your end of the blanket and I took mine and together we get paralyzed people into the presence of the Son of the living God who alone can fix us up, if that's a challenge to you, it's so wonderful that result to no result we never lose hope.

We never lose hope. But we have, facing the fact that the ministry we are in is God-given and a gift of his mercy, we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty and not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully. Isn't that a tremendous statement? Surely none of us as God's people were deliberately going about trying to handle the word of God deceitfully.

We'd want to do our dead level best to handle it rightfully. But instead of being dishonest and walking in craftiness and trying to handle the word of God deceitfully, on the other hand we are handling it by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this age has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, and I'm not quoting that as it is in the King James, because you lose the blessing of it.

It's the gospel, the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, should shine, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bond-servants for Jesus' sake, for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

We've been praying, Lord, if it could please you, do what this verse says, do something in this community that people couldn't brag about and say, we did it, couldn't lay it on the pastor or the evangelist or the church, that nobody would get the glory. But if people say, God did that, God did that, that'd be a revival, but we shut up to that. He's not seen fit to answer that.

I'm going to keep on praying the next place I go. I hope you'll keep on praying. Oh, let's never quit until he does, until he does, until he does.

Let me briefly just pick out of this glorious passage of scripture four blessed truths that I seem to have laid on my heart since coming to the building. I came with one message and the Lord took it away. I hope the devil didn't shoot me a curve.

It's difficult to know what to preach. I've got hundreds and hundreds of sermons. I've got some that are crackerjacks.

And they ain't worth a dime unless they're the message for the hour. But tonight I just want to talk at you a little while on four high spots in these eight verses. First, the 18th verse of the third chapter introduces us to one aspect of what a Christian is.

It says in that verse of scripture that a Christian is a sort of a fellow that spends his time in his subconscious, which is so much more real than our conscious. He spends his time while he's washing dishes or drawing plans for the government or preaching the sermon or buying groceries or this and the neighbor or doing personal work, down deep in his heart, he's looking. He's looking at somebody.

He's looking as in a glass. He's looking at the glory of the Lord. And as he spends his time, for this is the occupation of a child of God, it is so deep that people are not always conscious of it.

But it goes awfully deep. What is a Christian? He's a man or woman, boy or girl, that spends his time in this wilderness journey on the way to the celestial land with his eyes on the glory of the Lord. And as he does it, something is happening to him.

He's being changed into the same image as that one he spends his time looking at from glory to glory. A Christian is somebody who has to always be a first time gainer of sight of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not with these eyes, but with eyes that see so much better than these.

We are told, for instance, in the gospel of John, he that seeth, everyone that seeth the sun. It's a kind of a sight. After all, salvation begins not by what you do, but by what you look at.

Look and live is still the testimony of the word of God. As Moses lifted up the serpent on the wilderness and told the people, look, I'm lifting up my son on a cross. You look! There's life in the look! And it goes deeper than anything these eyes can see.

Salvation comes to a crisis when we're confronted face to face with the person of Christ and the truth of him. And we see his glory. Salvation continues by continuing to look at him.

And as you look at him, you're being changed into his image from glory to glory. That's what being a Christian is. And then salvation comes in the process we're going through it now, we're being saved now by being daily changed to look more like him.

And one day it will come to a fulfillment in the crisis. And the scriptures say, Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Brother, it does not yet appear what we shall be.

But we know that when he shall appear, watch it, we shall be like him. Why shall we be like him when he appears? For we shall see him as he is. Right now with open face we're looking, but we have to have a magnifying glass.

Our eyes don't see so good. But one day with undimmed view we shall see him, not through a glass, but see him as he is. And since we got saved to start with by seeing him, and since we stay saved to continue by our looking to him, and since we're going to be plumb saved by seeing him as he is, praise God.

We're going to be plumb saved when we see him with undimmed view. We shall be like him. And every man that has this hope of one day being made like the Lord Jesus Christ in all its completeness, well, that man fits on his hands and rolls up his sleeves and purifies himself.

And the architect's plan, the master plan that he uses for instruction and the goal he's working toward, he purifies himself even as he is pure. That's the story of a Christian. How does it start? You see the sun.

How does it continue? You behold his glory. How does it climb back? You see him with undimmed view. And that look, you shall be like him, having seen him as he is.

No wonder the Lord said, My yoke sees in my burdened life. I'll see nothing but terrible about getting a glimpse by faith of the Lord's glory. That's salvation.

Walking the days of our pilgrimage journey, amidst all of everything else, with our eyes on the glory of the Lord, that don't flicker out and burn out from hell or high water. Walking toward the time when with undimmed view we shall see him, that transforming look, we'll be like him. And that's salvation.

That's salvation. There's a second truth that I wanted to wound our hearts afresh as we face the fact, in verse 3 and verse 4, that a terrible tragedy has happened to mankind. What's the biggest thing wrong with men and women? What is the biggest obstacle in the way of trying to get men to the Lord Jesus Christ? I've always loved history.

My pleasure last summer, some friends took me 30 miles from where I was preaching, and we went for the third time, in my experience, to the battlefield at Gettysburg. I've always been interested in the Civil War, the most bloody war in human history, most destructive. And I looked at the battlefield map.

If you've been there, you know what I'm talking about. And I spent a couple of hours, and I'm just in hog heaven when I'm in something like that. And I fought the Battle of Gettysburg again.

And I went to that hill where Pickett made his charge and where they died like fleas, and where the Southern Army was almost wrecked and the war was won, and where the General directed that a certain hill, the center, be taken. And if it had been taken, the South would have whipped the Yankees, but they lost and went back defeated. And I studied the battle plan, just like playing a game of checkers or a game of chess.

And there was a center, there was a strategic point, and whoever won or captured or retained that point won the battle. That's how battles are fought. And I'm interested in the place where Satan has got his guns all centered.

And I'm going down the country saying that we must not be like the man, I think I've said this before, but be like the man who came rushing out of his house and jumped on his horse and ran off in every direction. And I keep trying to bring my mind back and my ministry back. I'm a specialist, not a pastor.

I can't bring the whole Bible in a week. I don't try to, but I do try to come in. I say over and over again, from one place or another, Oh, church of the living God, let's start attacking the devil at his strongest point,

where he's entrenched and where he's got this world wrapped in the hollow of his hand and where we must face the fact that as long as we ignore it and think that we're working with a matter of getting men and women to believe some nice little things, wouldn't that be good? But what we're actually facing is we're trying to preach a gospel that just says one thing.

It points to the glory of a person to a bunch of people who are blind as a bat and can't see the glory. And the reason they're blind is a bat to the glory of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's because they've had an operation performed on them.

Satan has blinded their minds. And he's done it for one reason. Not so they can't live fairly good moral lives, not so a thousand things, but just one thing, so lest he's blinded their minds.

If our gospel be hid, and it is hid to them that are lost, he said, I'm going to tell you why it is hid. They are the folks in whom the God of this age has performed an operation on their minds. And that's not simply here.

That's the whole man, the thing that makes men tick. And he's performed that blinding operation just to perform one service. He wants to fix it and keep it so men and women cannot see the light of the glory of the gospel of Christ.

He can just keep people from seeing the glory in the gospel, the glory of Christ. I do not know how to enter in, but I know that I'm right now, that we'll never, never, never begin to measure up to the day we live in now until we learn how to make an assault on Satan. He's got this world in his hands.

And I believe with all of my heart that in order to see a man saved, the power of the devil in his life must be broken. He's blinded. He can't see.

The gospel doesn't mean a thing on God's earth. No, sir. Because he's blind.

Because he's blind. Now, wait just a minute. He's blinded them, not so they couldn't understand the facts of the gospel.

Two and two makes four. Many lost people can argue what's called a plan of salvation, whatever that is, as plainly as you can. And he hasn't blinded folks so they won't believe in the virgin birth of Christ.

Hell's going to be full of people believing the virgin birth of Christ. I never could get much interested in that, because if Jesus Christ is sitting on the throne now, I'd have to take care of the rest of it, you know. And so no use to worry much.

But you know, he just blinded people, not so they wouldn't believe the gospel. Everybody in this town is a great believer in the gospel, because they interpret it. They tell you so.

Think I'm a heathen white preacher? I believe the Bible. But he's blinded them so that one thing won't take place. So they cannot experience the light of the glory of Christ as the gospel comes their way.

If he can just keep it to two and two makes four, and then never see the glory of Christ. Of course, he's got them. They're bound.

They're bound. We wrestle not with flesh and blood. We wrestle with a generation that's blinded so they cannot see the glory of the gospel.

If you're a child of God, that's the most wonderful thing. Tween eternity is the gospel. And you say, well, I can't see high enough.

I'd be so dumb and blind that they wouldn't just say, Hallelujah! Time to hurt it. But they're blind. They don't see a bit of glory.

A bit of glory. There's a third truth that I was sworn to mention tonight. That is, according to this passage of scripture, salvation takes place in a man's experience of a God working a miracle.

I come back to this over and over again. Salvation is the experience of men and women who have been blessed by God working a miracle in them and for them. One day there was a fellow named Saul of Tarsus.

He was 100% devoted. He was all out. Man, he was more zealous than anybody around.

He just made a hundred percent. He was ahead of the class. He was more zealous than anybody around.

He said, I'll tell you what fact. I'm going to rid the face of the earth of these blasphemers going around here claiming that that fellow Jesus is still alive. He said, I'm going to fix them.

I'm just not going to put up with it. I'll tell you right now, that's blasphemy. And old Paul thought it was.

Saul thought it was. And he got some letters empowering him to go. And you look at the map.

It was quite a distance in when they didn't have the jet airplanes. It was a little ways. Go from Jerusalem down up to Damascus.

And he set out to a town called Damascus to lay hold and arrest and bring to death for some of them and imprisonment for others. Some people going right over the country with that blasphemous lying thing about that fellow Jesus being raised from the dead. And he's going down the main freeway toward Damascus.

And the cars are whizzing by. And it got noontime. And the light shines.

And he said it was above the brightness of the noonday sun. And these visible eyes were stricken blind. But some other eyes were open.

And it wasn't long before he who started out on that road believing that Jesus Christ was the illegitimate son of a bad woman. It wasn't long before by the hearing of the air and the seeing of the spiritual eye he found out that Jesus was the Lord of glory and the Savior of sinners. And he fell at his feet a broken man.

And from then on out, just one thing made him think. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? What happened to him? He tells us in verse 6. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. Way back on in creation, Lord.

And the light shined out of the darkness. For God the Savior who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. Has shed in our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of God.

Where? In the face of Jesus Christ. That's how people get saved. Following darkness, now there's light.

I once was blind, but now I see. Salvation still happens when God turns the light on and darkness goes away. And women are given the sight of the glory of God.

Where? In the face. Where's the face? In the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was down in Texas in August.

I had the privilege of preaching five days. A couple of hundred young pastors had just met. And I preached the gospel of God's grace till the morning and night.

And after the service had come to close, the dean of one of the big baptist schools in Texas came up to me and said, Brother Preacher, would it be possible somehow or another in the old Southland to set up a conference and maybe let it be set up into lots of them and have maybe just preachers come together and sit there and get a Bible vocabulary once again. If you've followed me up and down America and Mexico and Canada, only I've never been out of the country. Next week will be the first time I've preached in Mexico and Canada and this country.

And hear us people talk. Us people talk. You'd never dream that it took a miracle to save a man.

You'd never dream the salvations of the Lord. You'd never dream that God's always the giver, and man always the receiver. It's a side order how our language magnifies us.

It never says much about the Lord. But I'll tell you one thing, brother. Salvation comes to man.

And God Almighty turns the light on. For there's just one thing that'll drive darkness away in this life. And the only power that can dispel the darkness that a man's in when his eyes are blind to the glory of the gospel.

Oh, one turn that situation in the victory of Almighty God. Old Paul said something happened to me. He said the light was turned on.

The light was turned on. Let God be the glory. Let God be the glory.

As a last thing that I dwell on a minute, implied in this passage of scripture, the only difference, or the fundamental difference, the difference that explains all the other differences, the one thing that separates the same sinner from a lost sinner, both of them, chances are, believe the same thing. Both of them, especially in America, where we used to have a lot of gospel and where the influence of the gospel still reaches far and wide. We have no trouble finding lost people that believe all the doctrines you believe in.

They believe in the virgin birth of Christ. They believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ. They believe the Bible's the word of God.

They believe Jesus died on the cross. They believe he was raised from the dead. They believe he's ascended on the right hand of God.

But they see no glory there. They see no glory there. The one thing that separates the saved person from a lost person is the saved person looks yonder at that one hanging on a cross.

And he sees glory there. And he can bathe his soul in that precious blood and sing, What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Christ. He looked yonder with eyes of faith at him exalted on the throne.

And he sees glory there. And he's glad he's there. When the Lord Jesus was here in the days of his flesh, the Bible tells us of some people who were able to experience and write down their experience.

One of them wrote these words, And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. He came.

He was in the world. And the world didn't have it. He lived and died.

And the world as such never knew him. The world knew him not. He came unto his own, his own nation, and his own, his own household, received him not, but to his many as received him.

To them gave he the right to become children of God, who were born, not of some things, but of God. And in that atmosphere, God said, He is in the world. The world didn't even know it.

He came to his own Jewish nation. They wouldn't see him. He came to his own household.

But we did. How come? We beheld his glory. We beheld his glory.

They said, We know who he is. We know who his brothers and sisters are. We know where he is brought up.

We know nothing good can come out of Nazareth. That's what they said. But John said, We beheld his glory.

That's it. In the long run, that's it, ladies and gentlemen. If it's just a matter of believing some truth, I don't know.

But it's a matter of seeing glory in the Son of God. Brother, ain't nothing can do away with that. And that'll do to ride the river with.

I've seen hundreds and thousands of people made wonderful professions and played out, and mighty decisions and played out, and were awful orthodox and played out. But a man who can say, Mine eyes have seen the glory. Rain or hail or sleet or sun or hail or nothing can wipe out that glory that makes its impact on your soul if you've seen the Lord.

The difference between a saved person and a lost person, not so much in what they believe, but who they see. What they see when they see him. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts.

What for? This is the sweetest verse, sometimes, I think, in all the words of God. What's he shine there for? To give the knowledge, first-hand information, brothers, of the glory of God in the face of Jesus. Amen.

Let's stand together. Let's sing together, Down at the cross where my Savior died Down where for cleansing from sin I cried That to my heart was the blood of God Glory to his name Glory to his name His precious name Glory to his name That to my heart was the blood of God Glory to his name What can wash away my sin? Say it, nothing but the blood of Jesus What can wash away all of sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus Oh, precious is the flow that makes me white as snow No other, nothing but the blood of Jesus Has he dropped the light in your soul? Come on now. Did you just figure it out, two and two made four? Did you let somebody tell you that you're the Christian? Have you seen the glory of the Lord? I mean

it.

That's it, dear ones. Amen. And nobody ever go down that Damascus road, but God bless you heart.

That's the way God saves people. He turns the light on. Amen.

God does that to him. Be the glory, glory to his name. World without end.

Praise the Lord. I've been trying to walk with the Lord nearly 40 years. The new wears off and the watery excess.

There's just one thing, and it's there. Was it raining or was it sunshine? Glory. That's the thing that keeps us going.

Amen. Praise his holiness. For our benediction was hit back.

Let's sing. I hear the Savior say. Thy strength indeed is more.

Child of weakness, watch and pray. I'm in need. Glory.

Jesus.

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