

7 Corrective Lenses for Spiritual Eyesight

by William MacDonald

The sermon discusses the importance of having spiritual eyesight and using corrective lenses to see the world in a new way, as taught by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5.

Duration: 42:24

Scripture: Isaiah 49:8, 2 Corinthians 5:9-12, 2 Corinthians 5:20, 2 Corinthians 6:1-2

Topics: "Spiritual"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of having spiritual vision. He uses the analogy of getting corrective lenses for our physical eyes to illustrate how we need correction in our spiritual vision as well. The speaker suggests that the Spirit of God provides us with seven correctional lenses for our spiritual glasses. These lenses help us to see life clearly and focus on what is truly important. The sermon also emphasizes the need to live in a way that pleases God, as we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Transcript

Turn this afternoon for our Bible study to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5, 5th chapter of 2nd Corinthians, and we'll begin reading with verse 9. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5, verse 9. Wherefore we labor that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it's for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then we're all dead.

And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. 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 hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation to it, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.

As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We then as workers together with him beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain, for he said, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee.

Behold now is the accepted time. Behold now is the day of salvation." I think this is one of the most significant passages of scripture dealing with life, Christian life and service. If you listen very closely, you can hear the heartbeat of the great apostle Paul.

This passage of scripture tells us what made him tick. It tells us what made him act the way he did. And I'd like to think of it with you this afternoon in terms of spiritual vision.

And I would like to suggest that in this passage of scripture, the Spirit of God gives us seven correctional lenses for our glasses. And if we go forth in life and look at life through these seven correctional lenses, we'll never go astray. We'll never miss out on that which is central in life.

Now they tell us that nobody has perfect vision, and I guess that's true. A lot of people have 20-20 vision, but as far as the curvature of the human eye is concerned, everybody has a measure of astigmatism. And it's certainly true in spiritual things that nobody has perfect vision.

Well, when you go to the eye doctor or to the optometrist, you know, most of you know, many of you know what it's like. You sit there in the chair and he puts an awkward-looking thing in front of you. It used to be a set of frames, but now he has a big machine of some kind that he puts in front of you and you look through two holes in the machine, and there's a chart down there at the other end of the room.

And he puts the light on the chart and you look out through these two openings and he says, now, Mr. MacDonald, what's the top line on the chart? And I say to him, what chart is that, doctor? And well, he says, this is really bad. And so he starts to snap down some lenses into the frames, you know, and when they first start coming down, he says, now do you see anything? And I'm always reminded of the scripture that says, I see men as trees walking, because it's still kind of blurry, you know, just as your faces are to me right now. But then the more he snaps these lenses down into place, the more things come into focus and the better the vision is.

And it really is quite remarkable, before he gets through, you have 20-20 vision. Well, now the Spirit of God in this passage of scripture gives us some corrective lenses that we as Christians should keep in our glasses at all times. And I'm going to go over them with you this afternoon, but first of all, I'd like to make a few comments on some of these verses.

Verse 9, we began with, it says, wherefore we labor that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. I think any of you who have more recent versions of the Bible will find that they're more accurate in this case. Verse 9 in the King James Version makes it appear that by laboring you can become acceptable to God, and that isn't true, is it? What makes us accepted with him? Well, not the labor of our hands could fulfill the law's demand.

We're accepted in the Beloved, we read in Ephesians chapter 1. Our acceptance before God is in the person of his Son. And so the real meaning of this verse is, wherefore we make it our aim, our ambition, that whether present or absent, we may be well-pleasing to him. Ah, well, it makes a big difference, doesn't it? You don't labor to be accepted with him.

You come and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, receive him as Lord and Savior, and you're accepted in him. But you do labor that whether present or absent, you may be well-pleasing to him. And that's exactly what the Apostle Paul was saying.

His life was one torrent of desire that he might do the thing that pleased the heart of Jesus Christ. It really was one great torrent of desire to be well-pleasing to him. Well, now we're going to skip down to verse 11, and we're going to come to the first corrective lens that the Apostle Paul had in his glasses.

It says, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. I call this corrective lens the fact of hell. The fact of hell.

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. You know, it's very easy for us as Christians to forget about hell, isn't it? It's very easy for us as believers to soft-pedal the doctrine of hell. And the more we're able to slide it in the background, the more comfortable our lives will become.

But the Apostle Paul had some corrective lenses in his glasses in which he constantly saw the flaming fires of hell, and it made a difference in his life. Now, I know it's an unpopular doctrine today, and yet my Bible still says, the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. Doesn't it say that in your Bible? My Bible still says, where there worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

And I want to tell you it's a solemn thought. It's a solemn thought. Our loved ones, our relatives, our friends, the people we're visiting day by day, if they go out into eternity without the Lord Jesus Christ, it's the lake of fire forever and forever.

About a year ago this time, some of our young people, the fellows in the dormitory at school, began getting desperate with God about that. And they had a rummage sale up in the dorm. It caused quite a stir.

Some of the fellows began coming in and buying some of the bargains, and then the Spirit of God convicted them. What were they doing buying all these things in a world where men were perishing, and the sales fell off rather abruptly all of a sudden? Well, then the fellows at a dormitory room full of suits and shoes and radios and jewelry and all the rest, and they didn't know what to do with it. So one day one of them came in to me and said, we'd like to take some of this down to the resale center.

And I said, why don't you? He said, we don't have a car. I said, oh, I see. Well, we'll go down.

So we got the car and we filled it up with goods and went down to the resale center. But on the way down, this fellow said to me, this is a parable of the rich man in hell. And I said to him, yes.

He said, would it be safe to say, would it be correct to say that the rich man is still in hell? And I said, well, you'd have to say that if you believe the Bible record. He said, would it be accurate to say that he hasn't served a second of his sentence? Well, I said, I think you'd have to say that if you really believe what the Bible teaches. Then he said to me, of course, some people say it was just a parable.

And what he was doing was opening the back door in case I wanted to go out, but I didn't want to go out. There's always a back door if you want to escape some of the clear meanings of some of the scriptures, you know, there are always people who might have theological explanations of why these verses don't mean what they say. But thank God for people who accept the Bible at its face value and their lives are transformed and empowered by it.

Well, I believe that was the case for the apostle Paul. He put this correctional lens in his glasses, the fact of hell knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. And can't you just feel the urgency in the life of the apostle Paul as he went over land and sea telling men that there was a hell to be shunned and a heaven to be gained.

Now, before we come to the next correctional lens, I'd like you to notice verse 13, for whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. And whether we be sober, it is for your sake. Apparently this truth so gripped the great apostle Paul that it made him look like a fanatic.

You know, that word fanatic is a dirty word in many circles today. It's a, it's an unpopular word, but apparently there was that about the apostle Paul that made him appear beside himself. Of course it was about the Lord Jesus too.

There was that zeal in the life of the Lord Jesus that made his own brothers think he was out of his mind. And when he went cleansing the temple, uh, the, uh, disciples remember that it was said of him, the zeal of thine house has eaten me up. Just think of that.

Just think of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ consumed with a zeal for the things of God. And that's what his life was like. And so I read this and I hear people say, well, you don't have to be too, you know, I mean, you can attend church once on Sunday.

I mean, we've all got to be religious and, uh, but just become a little outspoken for the Lord Jesus. And people look down their sophisticated noses at you and think that you've gone too far. Well, nevermind.

The great apostle Paul went too far too. He says, whether we be beside ourselves as to God, whether we be sober, it's for your sake, no matter what his mood might have been at any particular time, his goal was the same, the glory of God and the of his fellow men. Well, that speaks to my heart today.

All right. Now the second correctional lens is found in verse 14. He says for the love of Christ constrain us.

This is the second thing. First of all, he had those correctional lenses in the frames that by, in which he saw the flaming fires of hell and it made a difference in his life. And it sent him forth on a passion to see men and women delivered from that terrible faith.

But he saw something else. There was, there were correctional lenses in his glasses and constantly he saw a cross and on that cross, the son of God lifted high between heaven and earth. And he considered the fact of the death of Christ and what it meant at the vision burned in his soul.

You know, last Sunday, as we were remembering the Lord at one of the local assemblies, the thought came to me that really in my life, I've only had occasional glimpses, occasional glimpses of the glory of Jesus dying for me on the cross of Calvary. I wish the truth would seize me and grip me and constrain me and compel me more than it does. I'll never forget one, one day out in Honolulu in 1945, we Christian fellows in the Navy used to, used to exchange Christian books a lot of time to read and wanted to redeem

the time.

And a sailor boy came to me one day and he said to me, have you ever read C.T. Studd? And I said, no, I've never read it. He said, would you like to? I guessed I would. Innocence abroad.

I didn't know what was going to happen. And so he gave me C.T. Studd and I began to read it on a Saturday. I got off duty at noon, threw myself in the grass outside the B.O.Q. and began to read this book, C.T. Studd, and God began to deal in my heart.

And at supper time, I didn't bother to get up and go in for supper. There was something else more important than that. It got dark and I picked myself up off the grass and went into the room, put on the light and I finished the book at midnight.

Do you know, when I finished that book at midnight, I knew I'd never go back to the First National Bank of Boston. My little world of ticker tape went out the window that day. Do you know what did it? A statement by C.T. Studd.

He said, if Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him. And that verse slew me that day. It really did.

I couldn't answer it. Then I closed the book for that week. I sat down and wrote a letter to the bank and told them, don't bother to hold the job.

I won't be coming back to it. I didn't know what the Lord had for me, but I knew God had spoken to me. I knew I felt a divine tap on the shoulder.

And I praise God for that. I praise God for that whole experience. Experience I'll never forget.

If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice will be too great for me to make for him. You know, we sing this all the time. And every time I sing that hymn, just a faint glimpse of light comes in upon me, but not the great unveiling that it should be.

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and poor contempt and all my pride. See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flowed, mingled down. Did e'er such love and sorrow meet or thorns compose so rich a crown? Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small.

Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. I'll tell you there's nothing that'll melt the ice of our hearts like a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ dying for us on Calvary's cross. And it's only as we're able to forget that, that we can ever become complacent.

It really is. Oh Christ, thy bleeding hands and feet, thy sacrifice for me. Each wound, each tear demands my life, a sacrifice for thee.

That's what Paul said in Romans 12, 1 and 2. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God. And he had just taken 11 chapters to expound the mercies of God. He says, I beseech you by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto him.

Be not conformed to this world, be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. And he speaks of it as our reasonable service. And really nothing else is reasonable in the light of Calvary.

Well, the Apostle Paul says, the love of Christ constraineth us. As you know, that's an interesting expression. That word means it really moves us along.

In the United States at Christmas time, there's quite a rush down around the department stores. And the rush is so great that really about all you have to do is just get into the middle of the crowd and lift up both feet simultaneously and the crowd will just bear you along. And that's what the word means, constrains.

It means impels along, moves along. And the Apostle Paul says, this is a great constraining force in my life. And it's this that I saw the Lord Jesus Christ come down from heaven to Bethlehem and go on to the cross for me.

And the Lord of life and glory poured out his soul to death for me, a guilty, vile, ungodly sinner. And I'll never get over it. As long as I live and throughout all eternity, I'll never get over it.

Well, he says here, the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge. I like that expression because we thus judge. What does it mean when he says God doesn't expect us to throw our minds away when we come to this whole Christian faith.

He wants us to sit down and ponder it, sit down and consider it. All right. He says, sit down before the cross and start thinking.

And what will you think? Well, he says, we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead. Why did Jesus die for us all? Because otherwise we were all dead and on the way to hell. That's why he died for us.

He died for us because we couldn't save ourselves. He died for us because we were at the end of our ropes and if left to ourselves, we would have perished eternally. And the fact that he died for us was proof positive that we were dead in ourselves.

Why did he die? That he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. The Lord Jesus didn't die for me in order that henceforth I might go on and live my life the way I want to live it, pleasing myself in all things. He died for me on the cross of Calvary so that henceforth I might not live unto myself, but unto him who died for me and rose again.

The purpose of his dying was that he might be Lord. That's why. That's why he died.

That he might be Lord. It's a wonderful revelation that comes to the human soul when the child of God realizes that he was bought at the cross. And that fact means that I no longer belong to myself.

I belong to the Lord Jesus and if I'm to take my life and do with my life what I want to do with it, then I am a what? Anybody? A thief. That's what it is. A thief.

Because you're taking something really that doesn't belong to you. Isn't that true? I say it's a wonderful revelation when that comes home to the heart. And then the only logical, reasonable, sane, sensible thing you can do is say, thou hast bled and died for me henceforth.

The only sensible, sane, reasonable thing to do is to turn over the reins of the life to him that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. So there's the second corrective lens, the love of Christ. And of course, that takes you right back to

Calvin, the cross.

Keep it in your glasses. Keep it in your spiritual classes. Look at life through that correction.

Now, the third corrective lens is found in verse 16. It says, wherefore, henceforth, know we no man after the flesh. Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

What does that mean? Well, the first part of it means that now that I'm a Christian, I don't look at men as mere men in the flesh. Before I was saved, I would walk down the street and I'd see that woman going by with a ridiculous hairdo and I'd kind of snort inwardly and kind of ridicule her. Or I'd see some fellow and I had a way of pigeonholing people and classifying them, you know, according to my own proud estimate of what people should be.

The apostle Paul says now that I'm saved, I don't look at people that way. I don't look at people, look down upon them and scorn them and ridicule them. I look at people and I see precious souls for whom the Lord Jesus Christ has died.

Makes a difference, doesn't it? Really makes a difference. Precious souls. The apostle Paul says when I look at a man, I don't even think of what he is now so much as what he could be for God throughout all eternity.

That really is tremendous, isn't it? Really is tremendous to think that that man wallowing around in the gutter, steeped in sin and drunkenness and misery and all the rest, could hear the gospel, could respond to the gospel, could receive the Lord Jesus Christ and could be there gathered with those from every tribe and nation in eternity worshipping the Lamb of God. What a vision. That's what the apostle Paul is saying here.

As far as we know men after the flesh, we don't look at people in that way anymore. We have a new way of looking at them. I would call this lens the value and eternity of a soul.

The value and eternity of a soul. And in this connection, I would think of the most ragged, sinful person in all the world tonight. And remember that if I could heap all the riches in the world, all the stocks, bonds, diamonds, gold, silver, money, real estate and all the rest, if I could heap it all into a big mountain, that that one soul least esteemed in the world tonight is worth more than all the treasure put together.

But what is a man profited if he gained the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for soul? And I look at Calvary's cross and I see the Lord Jesus Christ dying there for sinners. And I get some estimate of God's value of a human soul. And that's what Paul's saying here.

So I look at people and I see potentially the brand of redemption on every human forehead. He says, yes, even if we've seen Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. What does that mean? Well, you know, it's better to know Christ today by the Spirit through the Word of God than it was to have been one of the disciples and know him when he was here on earth.

Does that sound like heresy to you? Well, let me explain. I believe that's what the Lord meant when he said to Mary, don't cling to me, Mary, I'm going to ascend to my father. And after I ascend to my father and the Holy Spirit comes, you'll know me better than you ever knew me before.

Let me just explain it this way. When Jesus was here on earth in the body, supposing he were standing here, well, he'd be closer to Ray than he would to the folks in the back row there. Who's he closer to tonight in this room? He's just as close to one of us as he is to the other.

And not alone there, but Matthew, when he was here on earth, saw Jesus through Matthew's eyes. Mark saw him through Mark's eyes. Luke saw him through Luke's eyes.

And John saw him through John's eyes. And we see him through the eyes of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the Spirit of God reveals him to us in all the splendor that God wants us to see. We used to sing when we were children.

I think when I read that sweet story of old, when Jesus was here among men, how he called little children as lambs to his fold, I should like to have been with him then. Well, I should like to have in a way, but it's really better to be with him now. It really is.

We know the Lord Jesus better by the Spirit through the word of God today than the disciples knew him when he was here on earth. And so Paul says, we don't cling to Christ in that carnal, earthly way that some did when he was here, though we have known Christ after the flesh yet now, henceforth, no, we him no more. Well, there you have the, the third correctional lens, the value and eternity of a soul.

We sang that last Sunday and teach me, Savior, teach me the value of a soul. And then the next correctional lens is found in the very next verse. It says, therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature, or there is a new creation.

All things have passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And I would call this correctional lens, the purpose of our creation, the purpose of our creation.

First of all, why was I created in the first place? I want to look at life through that correctional lens. And also why was I created anew? Why was I born again? Why was I created in the first place? And why was I saved? Paul says, if that I may apprehend that for which I was apprehended of Christ Jesus. So there must've been a purpose in it.

And I want that purpose to be lived out in my life. Now let's think of that. Do you think that men are born babies in order that they might die grocers? Is that why people are born? You know, within the last two years, I've been making a study of some of the things that men, that men have lived for passionately and devotedly.

I have a young friend, a professing Christian, and the, the, the passion of his life is turbulence in the upper atmosphere. He wrote a PhD thesis on it. Is that why we were born? I mean, I can see there's a place for this in life.

I mean, for an occupation, if you have to have an occupation, why study turbulence in the upper atmosphere, but to make it the main passion of your life, is that what it is? I have another friend and, and, um, his great study in life is seaweed in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Well, you laugh at that, but you haven't heard anything yet. I went over to Concordia Seminary within the last two years and put down, pull down some books from the shelf on subjects that men have made an intensive study on.

Subjects, deep subjects, like, like, um, mineral deficiencies in the tomato and the cocklebur. Is that why we were born? Well, some of you are laughing, but after you get out, maybe in the field and the going gets

rough and you feel a strong pull to go back and, you know, get into the academic world again, you probably want to study what some of the rest of them have studied, the Browning reaction in potato chips. People are spending their life on that today.

They really are. The Browning reaction in potato chips, or oxygen consumption in the earthworm, or the butterflies of Burma. Really? I can authenticate every one of them.

I mean, is that why I was born? Why did God save me? Really, why did he save me? I'd like to suggest to you tonight that nobody, that no Christian is ever called to be a plumber, a carpenter, a baker, or any of those things. Now that's shocking, I know, but before you jump on me, let me say this. Our calling is to be witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ, and those other things are secondary.

I don't say there's no place for them in the Christian life, but that's not our calling. Paul the apostle never said, he never said, Paul, call to be a tent maker. He said, Paul, call to be an apostle.

The tent making was to pay expenses, and I don't despise the tent making, not for a minute, but dear young friends today, it's not our calling in life. No matter what your relatives say, no matter what your parents say, no matter what the professors say, God has called us to higher service than them. He really has.

He really has. And so he says, therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new, there's a new creation. All things are passed away.

Behold, all things have become new. And I want to look at life through this correction lens and say, why? Why am I here? Why did God stoop down in sovereign grace and save me? I want to find out, and I want that purpose to be worked out in my life, whatever it is. When the Brooklyn Bridge was being built, well, the man had, he had it all out on the blueprint there, the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, and they started the construction.

And right after they started it, he was seriously injured and dragged off to the hospital. And all the time the bridge was under construction, this man was in the hospital. Finally, on the day the bridge was finished and to be dedicated, he was well enough that they could put him on a stretcher and put him in the ambulance and take him down by the river and show him the completed structure.

And when they put him out there on the stretcher by the bank of the river, and he looked up and saw the bridge, he said, it's exactly according to plan. But you know, one day God is going to call us home to be with himself, and he's going to bring out the blueprint of our lives. I believe it with all my heart.

I want to be nice if you can look at the blueprint in that day and say, it's exactly according to plan. That's really what will count in that day. Now, just let me pause here to say a word about this verse, not in connection with our correctional lenses.

This verse used to bother me as a young Christian. I'd hear people get up and say, therefore, if any man be in crisis, a new creature, old things have passed away, all things have become new. And they got up and they gave their testimony.

They created the impression that now they were saved or no problems at all. Everything was rosy. And I used to sit there and think, I wonder if I'm saved.

I sure can't say that. I mean, I was just being honest with myself and saying, well, boy, when I got saved, I wish I could say that old things passed away and all things became new, but they didn't. Still had a lot of old habits.

Still had a lot of old desires. Still had the strivings of the old nature within me. I thought, boy, I guess I'm not saved.

Once again, whenever there's a difficulty in the Bible, I say again, the key hangs in the door. And the key is in this verse. It's in Christ.

Therefore, if any man be in Christ. And this verse is describing what I am in Christ. And I thank God I can stand before you today and say that in Christ, old things passed away and all things became new.

They didn't. It didn't all happen in me, but it did in Christ. You said, what do you mean in Christ? Well, condemnation, for instance, was one of the old things.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. You see those things have all passed away. Thank God they are passing away in me too.

All the old habits, but they didn't all happen at once. It's like Lazarus. The Lord said, Lazarus, come forth.

And that body wrapped like a mummy came hurtling out of the grave. It really did. He didn't walk out.

He was bound. He came out and he got life. And then the Lord said, loose him and let him go.

And then he got rid of his grave clothes. Well, when we're saved, we're saved instantly. And then over the days that follow, we start to get rid of the grave clothes, don't we? So this verse doesn't bother me anymore.

This verse is my position. It's what I am in Christ. And God wants my practice to increase increasingly correspond to it.

But I don't look at it anymore and wonder if I'm saved because I can say, thank God in Christ, all things have passed away. All things have become new. And I want it to be true in William McDonald more and more too.

All right. Then I call the next correction lens, the responsibility of those who have the answer, the responsibility of those who have the answer. And I want to tell you, it's a solemn thing to have the answer and not to do anything about it.

Verses 18 through the end of the chapter remind us that God has committed to us the answer to the world's problems, the ministry of reconciliation. This is what men need. We're ambassadors of Christ.

And the picture is God on his knees before men and women, beseeching them through us to be reconciled to him through the Lord Jesus Christ. And I want to look at life through this correctional lens. McDonald, you have the answer.

You know what the world needs and what the world needs desperately. What are you going to do about it? In 1942, I went on duty in the Navy. In my first tour of duty, it was a dry land Navy.

Actually, it was the air arm of the Navy. I was down in Kansas City. And one night I went into the officer's mess hall there, and there was only one other person in it, a pilot, a pilot from Minnesota, Max Knudsen.

And he had ordered his supper and was reading the Kansas City Times. But I went in and ordered my supper, and I had the paper too and was reading it. And the Spirit of God said to me, you better witness to him.

He was busy. He was wrapped up in his paper, and I was wrapped up in mine. The Spirit of God seemed to say to me, witness to him.

Tell him the story. You've got it. You've got the answer.

Supposing he goes out into a lot of darkness, what then? And I didn't do it. You know, we were in a combat zone. There was no danger, you know, nothing like that.

You know, that night Max Knudsen took off in a cargo flight with a co-pilot for the West Coast, landed at Winslow, Arizona, took off, and the plane disappeared. Couldn't find it anywhere. You mean, what do you mean disappeared in the continental limits of the United States? How can a plane disappear? It disappeared.

A week went by, they didn't find it. A month went by, they couldn't find it. Two months, three months went by, couldn't find it.

Just went out into nowhere. The end of six months, when the spring thaw came, some Boy Scouts were climbing San Francisco Peak, just outside of Winslow, Arizona. They saw the tail structure of a plane sticking out of the snow.

And you know the rest of the story. I was there at the hangar back in Kansas City when they brought back the effects. They brought back the luggage.

I can see it today as vividly. And of course they spread all the personal effects out on the tarpaulin there on the hangar deck and the inventory. And then they sent it home to the parents.

And I can't tell you what it meant for me that day to walk by that hangar door and see Max Knudsen's stuff all there and the other fellows too. And I went back to my room and wept hot tears and asked the Lord that that might not happen in my life again. The Spirit of God had really told me.

Well, that's what Paul's speaking about here. The responsibility of those who have the answer. Put those lenses in your spiritual glasses and look at life through that.

And then the last one that I'd like to mention to you is found in verse 10. I'm going back because it'll be the last chronologically in our lives. But we must all, you know, it says in the King James Version, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

But the Revised Version and other versions say better. We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. There's a difference between appearing and being made manifest.

I call the doctor and I tell him that I'm having severe intestinal disorders and I want to see him. And so he says, very well, appointment two o'clock tomorrow. So tomorrow, tomorrow afternoon, I go to the doctor and I stand before him.

I appear before the doctor. Well, that's quite tame. Nothing very exciting about that.

Then he said to me, look, I got a little machine over here called a fluoroscope, and I'd like you to just come and stand in front of the machine. And so I go and stand in front of the machine and he turns on the current and he sees right through me. He does.

He sees right through me. At two o'clock, I appeared before him. That's one thing.

But when he turned on the current, I was made manifest before him. And this verse says, but we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. That everyone may receive the things done in his body according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad.

You say, well, how do you fit this correctional lens in your class? Well, I'll tell you how. Day by day, by asking ourselves the question, what will really count a hundred years from today? That's what, what will really be important then? And I want to tell you a lot of the things that young Christians are looking, are going after today are going to look pretty safe a hundred years from today. Pretty safe.

The whole thing will be brought into review, not for condemnation. We've already gone over that land that we've compassed that mountain long enough. We're not going to take it up again today.

This has to do with reward, loss and reward. But you know, in this connection, I often think of of a doctor in Montreal. I think his name is Dr. Penwell.

And he has been a specialist in brain surgery, you know, and he developed a technique some years ago where he could put a person in the operating table and with nothing more than a local anesthetic, he could open up the brain and actually expose the human brain. And he has a little electrode in his hand and the woman is lying there and her brain is open and he touches a certain section of the brain and he says to her, do you feel anything? And she says, I feel my little finger when you do that. Ah, he charts that.

That's the part of the brain that controls the little finger. So he'll touch another part of the brain. He'll say, what is it now? Oh, she'll say, I'm, I'm back in the hospital.

I'm, I'm back in the hospital. I'm having my first baby. She says, I can smell the ether just by touching that part of her brain with the electrode.

It all comes back to her that visit to the hospital. And so he'll touch another part of the brain. He said, what is it now? And she'll say, oh, I'm in the living room of my home.

We have the record player going Aida. I can hear it quite clearly. Just imagine by touching that part of her brain, it all comes back to her.

Listen, if Dr. Penwell in Montreal with a little electrode touching the human brain can do that, what can God do at the judgment seat of Christ? That's it. And that's what Paul's talking about here. And he says every day, as I go through life, I want to keep in mind the fact that pretty soon I'm going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and my life will be brought into review the things done in the body that I want to hear his well done in that day.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord. What's really going to count a hundred years from today? So in this passage of scripture, we have these correctional lenses. I don't know what God might have for you in your life.

I don't know just what his will is, but I do know this, that if you really keep these correctional lenses in the glasses, look at life through them, you'll come to the end and your life will have been worthwhile. But I think that's what John meant when he said it. Now, little children, abide in him that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Do you ever think of the possibility of shame before Christ at his advent? Most people will deny it as a theological impossibility. The Bible speaks about it as a practical possibility and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

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