

Saints In Light

Col 1: 9-12 *Therefore, we also since the day which we heard, do not cease praying for you and requesting that you may be filled full with the realization of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing. Bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the realization of God, being endued with all power according to the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who makes you competent for a part of the allotment of the saints in light.*

I think we ended up last time saying some things about how the only way to walk worthy of the Lord is to have the mind of Christ working in the body of the Christ. Without the Lord's mind working in the Lord's body, it's impossible to act according to the Lord's will. I was saying last time that Christians are usually aware that there is some kind of a big problem in the church. Christians that care, that is. Christians that are genuinely born again look at the church and see that something is wrong; that something's lacking. There's a whole host of things you could very easily point your finger at and say, "This shouldn't be that way. Something is wrong."

But our failure to understand the true problem of the human soul becomes the reason for our failure to experience the true solution. I've just seen that to be true so many times and in so many ways. If you don't understand what the problem is, there's no hope that you're ever going to understand God's solution.

What is the problem? The problem is that the light you think you have is darkness. What does that mean? It means that the thing that you walk according to, the thing that shows you what is real and that you're using for light, *isn't real light*. What does natural light do? It shows you what is around you; it makes you able to assess what you're looking at. And if that light—the thing you're using for light—is darkness, well then how great is that darkness! If your light is darkness, everything you're seeing is wrong. It's not right. Everything you do comes out from what you see. Everything you want...everything you think God wants... everything you think you should do...everything you think is ok... everything you justify and rationalize has to do with the way you see.

The eye is the lamp of the body. Jesus says this. He says if your eye is clear, that is, if the eye truly is letting light into you, then the whole being, the whole person, is full of that light and becomes an expression of that light.

Now, when He says “the eye is the lamp of the body,” don’t think of the light coming *out* of your eye like a flashlight. That’s the wrong way to think of it. The eye being the lamp of the body is like a light that comes *IN* and fills the body with light. This lamp shines inwardly. And if the lens, the bulb, the glass around the candle—your eye-- is clear, well then the light can actually go in and fill you with light in such a way that you become an expression of light. You become a son of light. You walk in the light as He is in the light and have fellowship with Him. You see what He sees.

But if the eye is cloudy, is dirty, is closed, so to speak, if the eye is like a muddy vessel or something that obscures, dims, or covers the light, then no light comes in and everything you do is an expression darkness.

I mention this because of what it says in verse 13. Verse 13 is the verse where Paul says ‘He has translated you out of the domain of darkness and into the kingdom of the Son of His love,’ and it’s a verse that I feel like we could talk about for weeks and weeks. There is power in darkness. I suppose you could say that darkness is the problem. You could also say that sin or Satan or the adamic nature is the problem. But, these things are just the things that have free reign in the darkness. They’re the things that can grow and govern in the darkness.

What is the power of darkness? Again, you could say the power of darkness is Satan, sin, or the fallen man. (These three aren’t necessarily synonyms, but they’re all kind of describing the same nature.) The power of darkness has to do with the fact that in the dark, you cannot know or see or experience what is real. The power of darkness is what feels real to you in the perfect absence of God’s light and perspective and truth, and it governs your soul. It is powerful because it is the most real thing that you know. Everything that you choose and look at and try to discern and understand and justify and live for and live by... absolutely everything, is seen through the lens of that darkness, and is therefore governed by the power of that darkness.

We just have to reckon with this and accept that it’s true. Jesus says it. The apostles say it. The prophets say it, and God says it right in the beginning in Genesis 6 when He declares that every thought of man’s heart-- every imagination of man’s heart-- is only evil, all the time. Jeremiah says, ‘The heart is desperately wicked beyond all things, who can understand it?’ Well of course you can’t understand it without light! But if the thing you’re using for light is darkness, you’re going to

think you do understand it. You're going to think you understand your problem, and then you're going to approach God for a solution while holding to a false understanding of your problem.

And that's where we get our hundreds and thousands of different versions of Christianity. They correspond to a bunch of different people's natural understanding of a problem. We present a Christianity to each other that corresponds to our understanding of our problem. For one person it's this, for another it's something else. Some people say, "That's not right...It's more like this..." And we argue, but all these opinions are just exactly that: they're opinions that come out from the darkness and they usually don't even touch the true problem. They don't get that far.

The problem in the human condition is that we were born without light. And when I say without light, I don't mean without intellect or natural understanding. True ignorance is not the absence of facts or understanding; it's the absence of light. Light is God's understanding, and God's understanding is not facts. It's not information. God's understanding is a living view in the light. It's a living perspective that makes your heart see what God is seeing. That's what light does. "In His light you see light." In His light you have fellowship—that is to say you actually experience what He's experiencing with Him.

That's what fellowship is. Fellowship is when two believers (or a believer and God) are actually walking in the same reality according to the same light. In the light you experience the same thing. And when it's the light of Christ, then this is the actual perspective of God almighty becoming the living view of your heart, of your soul, in such a way that you are constrained and moved and motivated and crushed and brought up from the dead... all by this light! There are so many ways to describe what the light does in your heart! It makes what's real to God the reality that you see and walk in. And then you produce the fruits of the light, as Paul talks about in Ephesians 5:9 (NASB)

I know I'm repeating myself, but Paul is about to tell us that the inheritance is for the saints in the light. The inheritance is for the saints in the light. The inheritance is *not* outside of the light. **You aren't going to experience the inheritance without experiencing the light. The light is the only thing that makes the inheritance real to your soul.** Because although the inheritance is still a reality even if you're in the darkness, it is completely out of the realm of your experience because it's completely out of view.

Getting back to 'walking in a manner worthy of the Lord,' Christians are happy to confess their lack of direction. Christians are happy to confess their lack of perfection. They're happy to confess sins or even their lack of understanding. But what we're very rarely willing to do is turn our hearts and see the true problem. When you see the true problem, it's not going to be something that you

struggle with—it's going to be YOU. It's going to be something that you think is light but it's really darkness. It's not going to be just what you're looking at, it's going to be the light that you're using to see. It's not just going to be what you do, it's going to be the man and the life that you think can stand before God.

And if the heart is willing to see how far that rabbit hole goes, then God has a solution for you. But the solution comes as God's remedy to a problem that is infinitely bigger than most of us are willing to face. And even if we've caught glimpses of this, I guarantee we haven't seen the bottom of this hole. In some ways I think the Lord is continually showing us the greatness of the problem and then revealing Himself as the greatness of the solution. I don't know that that ever stops.

When Paul is praying for them he says, "Here's what I want. I want you to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Spiritual understanding is not *your* understanding of spiritual things. That's part of the darkness and problem! Spiritual understanding is the Spirit's understanding working in your heart, causing your heart to see with His light.

So Paul is not praying that they come to a greater natural or theological understanding of spiritual things. That's never, ever, ever the way it works! The Spirit's understanding begins to work in you and then, afterwards, with natural words and language and thought processes, you can attach that spiritual understanding to language, analogies, and parables. But spiritual sight comes before understanding or words. And then the words attempt to describe the spiritual view.

This is why the entire Old Testament is comprised types and shadows. This is why Jesus spoke in parables. This is why everything God told the prophets to do was a figure or symbol. It was all figures, pictures, and parables because a picture is far better than a sentence. Why? Because in your heart a picture will go as far as you're willing to see. So God shows you this type and shadow of a tabernacle, for instance, and you don't have any idea what it is. And yet it's an incredible picture of something He understands. And if you continue to read about it, the more you let the Lord work in your heart, that same picture and all the details of it go deeper and deeper and mean so much more. They're like illustrated sermons or a living testimony. Living pictures.

And it's the same with the parables. Jesus told things in parables so those who were hungry could see with new eyes and those who wanted a doctrinal statement of faith couldn't understand a thing He was saying. And He basically says that when He says, "I speak in parable so that seeing you can't see, and hearing you can't hear."

Let me just say this a little more clearly before I move onto verse eleven. The way that you're fruitful in every good work, the way that you're pleasing to Him, the way that you walk in a manner worthy of the Lord is really very single and simple. **The only way to do the will of the Lord is for the mind of the Lord to be working in the body of the Lord.** That's it.

If you lack the mind of Christ, which is His light, His faith, His spiritual understanding and view, then all you can do is guess at outward things that you think He wants. And that's a really popular idea in the church. "What would Jesus do?" That might help you make some better natural decisions, but that's not bearing true fruit or walking in a manner worthy of the Lord.

Lets look at verse 11--- "Strengthened with all might according to His glorious power." I've been thinking about this word "power."

Let me just say this. Christianity should be an experience of power, and not just an experience of words. Consider these verses:

1 Corinthians 4:20 *"For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power..."*

2 Timothy 3:5 *"They hold to a form of godliness although they have denied its power. Avoid men such as these."*

2 Peter 1:3 *"Seeing that His great power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness."*

I could have quoted more, but I think these verses are really interesting because, through much of my life, Christianity was exactly what Paul is warning against in these scriptures! **Christianity was words and not power, and it was a form of godliness without power.** It was basically a form of godliness and I was the power of it! And it was a collection of words that had to be understood and believed.

One of my kid's is on a Christian basketball league, and we had this Parents Against Kids night, and we were all playing and afterwards the coach called us over for a little talk. And he was talking to the kids primarily, but the parents were all there, and he was saying to them that Christianity is really so simple because all you have to do is just believe one fact.

And then he asked, "Does anyone know what that one fact is?" One kid said, "Jesus died on the cross!" and he said "No, that's not it..." And then there were a few other guesses, but at last he said

that the one necessary fact was that Christ rose from the dead. He said that many people believe that Christ died on the cross, but they're not Christians. But if you believe in the fact of the resurrection, you're a Christian. Then he said, "It's so simple!... and you can get anybody saved by helping them believe in that fact too!"

I didn't say anything. Perhaps I should have... but I was thinking, 'Nooooo, not really!' First of all, human belief isn't the way to be born of the Spirit. True faith is a work of the Spirit, a gift from God. And second of all, if you are born of the Spirit, there's a whole lot more to Christianity than believing in the historical resurrection from the dead! There's a power to it. There's a life that you should experience reigning in power.

What is the power that Paul is talking about? I went through a time in my life as a Christian where I was involved with a ministry that was Charismatic/Pentecostal. We would take some of these verses about power, and we'd apply them to signs and wonders. I thought the power was all about healing sickness and disease, and casting out demons. Now, to be clear, I still believe in God's power over the natural realm and demons and sickness, etc... and yet I just can see so clearly now that the ways that God touches the natural creation are just dim shadows of what true power can do. These outward things are just "the fringes of His ways" (Job 26:14)

In fact, that's what the natural shadows were accomplished for. The power of God to part the Red Sea, for instance. Do you know that that's a natural picture of a kind of power that God wants to work in your heart? He wants to bring you out of death and slavery into life and resurrection and covenant. Paul tells us this. He wants to part the Red Sea and bring your soul out of one kingdom and into another!

Here's another one: 2 Corinthians 4:6—God who said 'Light shall shine out of darkness'... speaking of the natural creation of the world... "is now desiring to shine a greater light in our hearts!"

What I'm trying to say is that these incredible miraculous things that happen in the outward realm, and even all the miracles Jesus did when He healed blind eyes, cleansed lepers, walked on water—all of those things have happened and do happen, and to some extent probably always will happen, but God has a far greater power than the natural testimonies he shows us in the natural realm. And God has a desire to call human hearts out of one realm and into another.

What does true power do? What is the real power of God? What is the power of God about which the New Testament speaks more than anything else? It does indeed talk about the power of signs and wonders, especially in the gospels, but there is another power... No... It's not *another* power.

It's the same power, only a greater manifestation. What does it do? **It works the resurrected life of God, of Jesus Christ, in the soul of man.**

I know we're maybe so used to hearing about this in sermons or reading it on refrigerator magnets, and so maybe some of the potency of this statement is taken away. But please let this sink into your heart. The real power of God... The power that Paul said 'worked mightily in him, beyond what he could ask or think...' What was that power? **It was the resurrected life of the Son of God. The uncreated Son of God living in the created human soul in such a way that one Seed is raised up, formed, and glorified where it never was before, and another seed-- and all of the sin and death and flesh and imaginations that correspond to that seed-- are actually crushed down, cut off, and put under His feet.**

That's where the enemies of God are, my friends. They are not in foreign countries that worship idols. They're not in bad politicians that do mean things. The land where God is destroying uncircumcised flesh and idols, high things, and imaginations *is the land of your heart*. The enemies of God were always in His land. God never sent David to fight in Ethiopia. He never had a battle in China. He never got on a ship and went to Canada and fought against the bad guys there. Why? Because God had purchased a specific land... a land that represents your soul. The whole land was given over to a king (who represented Christ), and the only place that God wanted King David to destroy uncircumcised flesh and take down high places and remove every contrary thing to His government was *in this land*.

What I'm trying to say is that the enemies of God are in YOU. They're in His land. They were in His land in the types and shadows, and they're still in His land. David's sword was invincible as long as he was walking by faith, and so is the sword of Christ in you. It does the exact same thing in you.

David would go out and make raids on the Philistines and come back with all of their goods and none of his men would even be injured. Now that's an amazing power. David had these mighty men—one would kill a lion on a snowy day; another would kill five giants; another would kill 200 men in a battle, etc. What is that? It's power! It's power manifested in the natural realm. Samson was probably the best example. He used the jawbone of a donkey to kill a thousand men.

These are pictures of the cross. The power of God is the cross of Christ. What does the cross of Christ do? It always does the same thing. It cuts down one man and brings up another. It totally removes from your soul the only light and life that you've known, and establishes in your soul a foreign light and life that you have not known. "You have not gone this way before." Everything about it is different and new.

I think it's a good idea to ask yourself if Christianity is an experience of power to you. I think the answer should obviously be "yes" for all of us. The power of life and light, the power of the kingdom of righteousness.... Do you know that power? Or do you just believe in it? Do you know that light? Is it shining in you? Is it displacing things that formerly made sense to you so that now they seem like nonsense? Is that happening in you? Are you feeling and experiencing a nature that is different and contrary in every way to the nature that you were born with?

The answer to these questions should be "yes," but if it isn't don't feel condemnation. The solution is to get on your face and say "Father show me the power that can work mightily in me. Open the eyes of my heart to see a light that dispels darkness; to see a king who has a powerful, invincible sword." Self-condemnation is not the pathway to anything spiritual, but a humble heart and true hunger will let God work in you.

Let me say a couple things about this next part...

"Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

I don't know what I used to think about this verse before I saw any light, but I'm sure I just read over it without thinking very much at all. I assume that when I came to "the inheritance of the saints in light," I probably just thought that this was another way of saying "Christians.".... Saints in light... "We're the saints in light." Maybe I sang a song about it! But I don't think I actually stopped there and asked any real questions.

What I was saying in the beginning of this class is that **everything about our inheritance is experienced in His light. There is a life God has given to your soul that you will never know unless you know it in the light. There is a purpose for which you exist that you will never know unless you know it in a very specific light.** There's a righteousness that God has granted to you in His Son. It's a righteousness that is real; it's not just a status, like we often say. Do you know that righteousness? It's a righteousness that you can actually experience and know, but it's a righteousness that you will only ever experience in a very specific light.

Now we need to understand something. In the absence of this light, what we'll do is take these words-- purpose, life, righteousness, whatever—and we'll drag the words into our darkness, and then we'll make them mean something to us there. So that the life, the abundant life that God promised us, ends up being personal provisions in the natural realm. Or the righteousness God has

given me in Christ ends up being a bunch of ‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle’s’... Or the purpose that I read about in Scripture comes to mean these seven things that I do on a daily basis to please God.

Do you see what we’re doing?! There’s only one place where these things are real and that place is a Person, and He has his own light. He comes with His own light... He IS His own light. And the only way to experience these things that are uniquely Christ is to see by the light of His life.

And friends, the most natural thing in the world to do with a bible in your hand – rather than saying like a little ignorant child, “Father show me the light in which these things have reality,” – the most natural thing is to use our slimy dark fingers, grab those words, and apply them to whatever thing we think we know or have experienced. We read God's words, and in the blindness of our own heart, we say, “I know that purpose. I know that light. I have righteousness.”

It’s a horrible thing that we do with the word inheritance! The things that are preached in the church today as being the inheritance of God... it's shameful! We say God's inheritance is meaningful relationships, prosperous businesses, successful family life, large bank accounts! Are you kidding me?! You can see and experience all of that stuff with your natural, blind eyes.

The saints in the light.... Saints in the light... That’s not just another word for “Christians”. The light isn’t the church building that you go to on Sundays. The light is where the inheritance is real, and it’s also how we know it. It’s known in the light. It’s experienced in the light, and nowhere else. His light sees His life. It’s the light of life, you see? And only to the measure that we walk in light and live in light and grow in light are we going to experience the inheritance that’s for the saints in light.