

CHRIST IN YOU

The Hope Of Glory

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Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:24-29—Now, I rejoice in sufferings for you, and I fill up that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ in my flesh, for his body, which is the assembly [church]; of which I became minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given me towards you to complete the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is Christ in you the hope of glory; whom we announce, admonishing every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, to the end that we may present every man perfect in Christ. Whereunto also I toil, combating according to his working, which works in me in power.

The apostle Paul mentioned here a mystery, a

mystery that has been hidden through ages and generations, but now has been manifested to the saints. And this is what we want to consider—that mystery.

In the Bible a mystery is not something mysterious or mischievous. It simply means it is a secret. It is not only a secret, we may say it is a top secret. It is a secret of God, not of man. It is God's secret, something that God has conceived in His heart even before He created all things. It is something glorious, something that is beyond human comprehension. The Bible tells us that it is something that eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, and it has never come into man's mind that which God has prepared for those who love Him.

God has a secret and it is so glorious that He cannot just share it at any time. It needs many preparations. For this reason, that secret has been hidden in God through ages and generations. And it is not revealed until after Christ, God's own Son, has

come into this world and accomplished the work of salvation. Then God revealed this secret to all the saints. It is said here: “. . . the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations.” This mystery is so glorious, so rich, and yet it is now being manifested among the nations, the whole world. What is this top secret? It says: “. . . which is Christ in you the hope of glory.” Christ in you is the mystery. The riches of the glory of the mystery is the hope of glory.

Once there was a man whose name was Saul. He was a Pharisee, one who was trained very strictly in Judaism, and he was very zealous for God. He thought that Jesus Christ was an impostor of Judaism, so he persecuted the followers of Jesus. But one day, he was on his way to Damascus to seize Christians, to bring them to Jerusalem to be judged, to be sentenced. As he was approaching the city of Damascus (that was during the noon time), suddenly a light brighter than the sun

shone upon him. He fell to the ground, and then he heard a voice: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads." He said, "Lord, who are you?" And the voice said, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest" (see Acts 9:3-7).

This changed his whole life. So he wrote in Galatians 1: "God was pleased to reveal His Son in me." He was changed from Saul the persecutor, to Paul, the apostle. Notice what he said: "God was pleased to reveal His Son in me," not just "to" me. It is true; God did reveal His own Son, Jesus Christ, to Paul. But it is more than *to* him, because *to* can be objective, can be external. But he said, "God was pleased to reveal His Son in me." Now *in* is very intimate, very personal, very subjective. God had revealed Jesus Christ *in* Paul. It is Christ *in* you, not just *to* you.

You may listen to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and you may hear the message. It means something to you, but that is not enough. God wants to reveal His Son in you. God wants His Son to be in you, not just to you, but in you. Now you will say, "How can He be in me?"

The Relationship of the Lord Jesus and His Father

When our Lord Jesus was on earth, the Son of God

came into this world to be a man. He took upon Himself a human body, just like yours and mine and He walked upon this earth for thirty-three years. When He was thirty years old, He came out and preached the glad tidings. He declared God to mankind, and some believed in Him. Some disciples gathered around Him and He was with them for three years. He tried to tell them His relationship with God. He said: "My Father is in Me and I am in the Father. When you see Me, you see My Father. When you hear Me, you hear My Father. It is not Me who is talking; it is My Father who speaks in Me and through Me."

Whenever our Lord Jesus tried to tell His disciples about this, they could not understand because this was something that had never happened. How can a person be in another person? A person can stand by another person; he can be with another person, but he cannot be in that person. Even when our Lord Jesus was on earth, because He had a physical body, He could only be alongside His disciples; He could not be in His disciples. So when our Lord revealed to His disciples His relationship with His Father—My Father is in Me and I am in My Father; We are one—the disciples could not understand. Even to the very

last, the night before our Lord Jesus was to be betrayed, He had a talk with His disciples. He told them: "In that day you shall know. You do not understand now, but the day will come and in that day you shall know. My Father is in Me and I am in you and you are in Me."

What is that day? That day is the day of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. After He died, He was buried, and on the third day He was raised from the dead, but it is a resurrection body, a spiritual body. After He resurrected, He appeared to His disciples. He breathed into them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." That is the day. How can one person be in another person? It is by the Holy Spirit because the Spirit does not have a physical body like you and me. It is like the wind, the breath that can breathe into you. Of course the Spirit is a person, not an impersonal thing, therefore, He can be in you and in me.

The relationship of our Lord Jesus with His Father is an inward relationship. From eternity the Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son. Why? It is because they are in the Spirit and the Spirit is in them. So this is the relationship of the Godhead. God is one—three persons in one—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. And yet they are in each other and they are perfectly

one. This is an eternal reality, a mystery beyond our explanation. But thank God, the Lord said, "One day, this will happen to you too. One day, I will be in you and you in Me. Your relationship with Me is like My relationship with My heavenly Father."

The Holy Spirit Comes In

How can this be? It is because after our Lord Jesus accomplished the work of redemption, He ascended up on high, and He sent the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead to us. When the Holy Spirit came, He not only births us, but He also comes into all who believe in Him. So every believer has the Spirit of God in him or in her. It is not just that you believe on the Lord Jesus. When you believe on the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes within you. He comes and dwells in your new spirit. The Bible says, "The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." The Holy Spirit comes and dwells in our new spirit. The Spirit is called the "Spirit of Christ" (I Peter 1:11). So, when the Holy Spirit comes into you, Christ also comes into you. And not only Christ comes into you, but even God the Father comes into you.

The greatest thing that ever happened to us is this: when you believe in the Lord Jesus, Christ comes and

dwells in you. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, all come and dwell in you. This is a mystery. This is salvation.

I remember Andrew Murray said: "Salvation is not just having your sins forgiven and going to heaven." Now, of course it includes that. If you believe in the Lord Jesus your sins are forgiven because He bore your sins on the cross. He paid the debt for you before God. And it is true, if you believe in the Lord Jesus, you will go to heaven; you return home where God is. If you do not believe in the Lord Jesus, you will not be able to return home because you do not know God. But salvation is more than just having our sins forgiven, or going to heaven. Of course that is good. We thank God for that. But salvation is Christ in you and you in Christ. God gives His Son to you that He may be in you. So Andrew Murray said: "This is the beginning and the end of salvation. This is full salvation."

Now you have believed in the Lord Jesus. Do you know that Christ is in you? Do you know that this is the greatest mystery? the greatest thing that has ever happened to you? The apostle Paul used this as a proof that we are in faith. In II Corinthians 13:5 he said: "Examine your own selves if you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Do

you recognize that Christ is in you, unless indeed you are a reprobate?" In other words, how do you test a person whether he is in the faith of Jesus Christ? The proof that you are in faith is that Christ is in you. If Christ is not in you, then you are a reprobate; you are a pretension, a nominal Christian, a deception, a falsehood, not real. The only thing that makes being in faith real is that Christ is in you.

Knowing Christ Dwelling in You

Do you know that Christ is in you? Are you conscious of His presence in you? Do you treasure this mystery? The problem is often that after you believe in the Lord Jesus, you think that by believing in the Lord Jesus, all you are looking forward to is having your sins forgiven and going to heaven one day after you die. You do not know what God has done for you. You do not know that when you believe in the Lord Jesus, God has done something far beyond what you can ever think of: He puts Christ in you. You believe in Him and He comes and dwells within you. This is the greatest mystery, the greatest blessing that God has given to you. This is something God has done. It is not something that you can do. You just believe in the Lord Jesus and God, by

His Spirit, will come into you and live in you. It is not only revealed in Paul, it is revealed in every believer.

This mystery has been manifested to the saints. Therefore, it is revealed in every believer. If you believe in the Lord Jesus, Christ is in you; God is in you. Christ, the crucified One, the resurrected One, the ascended One, the One who is now at the right hand of God, is in you. You have Him.

You may say, “How do I know He is in me?” If you believe in the Lord Jesus and you do not know that Christ is in you, I wonder if you really believe in Him, because if you believe in Him, you will know. How can a person dwell in you and you do not know? Or to use a bad illustration: if somebody is staying in your house, not just for a minute, but permanently, how can it be that you do not even know he is there? Something must be wrong. How can Christ be in you from the time you believe in the Lord Jesus to eternity—He never leaves you nor forsakes you, He is always there, ever there—how can it be that you do not know He is there? You can neglect Him for an hour, for a day, for a year, for a lifetime? You never heard Him? He never speaks to you? He never touches you? It is impossible! The moment you believe in the Lord Jesus, the

Spirit of God within you will cry out, “Abba, Father.” God is now your Father. Through His beloved Son, you become His child. You can talk to God your Father. He is with you and He talks to you. Have you ever heard Jesus speaking to you? It is not with the outward ear, but it is in you.

You know it is true, sometimes, you even can hear audibly. I do not know if it is really audibly or if it is as if audible. I remember after I believed in the Lord Jesus, one day, there was a crisis in my life. I had some controversy with God, something that God was calling me to do, and I hesitated. I was reluctant. I found it difficult, impossible. I tried to reason with Him to give me some more time. And strangely, it is as if I heard someone talking to me: “He that loves his father and mother more than me, cannot be my disciple.” There was nobody there, but I heard it. And many, many more times, not audibly, but I have heard it within me. He talks to me. Sometimes He restrains me. Sometimes He constrains me. Sometimes He just touches me, a gentle touch, but very persistent. Sometimes, it is as if there is a light shining within me, and when He does that, there is peace and life. And when you rebel against that, there is spiritual death in you, darkness.

He is in you. Do you know that? Are you in constant communion with Him? Or do you shut Him in the closet and just ignore Him completely? Christ in you is the hope of glory. Christ in you is not there dormant, inactive. He is a Person, a divine Person. How can you shut Him in a closet for life? He is active in you. He is in you to give you glory.

What is Glory?

What is glory? In the Bible, glory is a term that is beyond definition, because when you try to define glory, you limit it. Glory is as unlimited as God Himself. God is glorious, within and without. Sometimes the Bible uses glory to substitute the name God. God is all glorious. Whenever God appears, you see glory. In the Hebrew language there are many words that describe this *glory*. Sometimes that word means “something weighty, heavy.” It is not light. Paul mentioned in II Corinthians “the weight of glory.” Sometimes in the Old Testament *glory* means “excellent, beautiful, grand, bright, conspicuous.” It is beyond description. It is the self-manifestation of God, of His own nature, and of His acts.

In the New Testament Greek, the word *glory* means “opinion, estimate” and therefore, “honor according

to good opinion.” The glory of God is especially manifested in His Son, Jesus Christ. In John 1:14 it says, “The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among man, and we beheld His glory, even as of a son with a father, full of grace and truth.” When our Lord Jesus performed his first sign, turning the water into wine, the glory manifested. When our Lord Jesus took the disciples to the mount of transfiguration, He was transformed, filled with light and glory. When He rose from the dead, His glory was manifested.

In the Old Testament, in Exodus 33, Moses stood between the children of Israel and God and interceded for the children of Israel. God heard him and he found favor in the sight of God. Then Moses dared to make a request. He said, “God, show me Your glory. Let me see Your glory.” In other words, “I want to see you.” And God said, “No one can see Me and live.” No one is worthy because He is too glorious. But God said, “All right, I will let you see My back; not My face, but My back. Hide in a cave, and when I pass by, I will show you My glory.”

So in Exodus 34 God passed by. God hid Moses and God declared His name: “Jehovah, Jehovah. Merciful and gracious, slow to anger, forgiving our iniquities.” In other words, when God

declared His name, He showed his glory to Moses, but it was the back. Why? When a person is absent, you use his name, so it is as if you see the back.

But when you come to the New Testament time, thank God, we can see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (see II Corinthians 4). Today, we not only hear His name, but we can see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus has manifested to us all the glory of God. He is the outshining of the glory of God.

Having said all these things, you may still wonder what glory is. I think brother T. Austin-Sparks explained it very well. He said, “Glory is the self-gratification of God the Creator in all His created things. What is glory? Glory is when you say, ‘This is how it ought to be.’ That is glory.” You know, when you do something, when you see something and you say, “This is what it ought to be—just right,” there is a sense of glory in you. You are happy, satisfied. So he said, “Glory is when God can look at you or look at the thing and say, ‘This is how it ought to be.’” Then glory is manifested. So glory is God satisfied, God manifested, God approved, and God is happy. Then glory appears.

Do you not know that God’s purpose for us is glory? We are so small.

Probably all we want to get from God is to go to heaven. That is all we want. Once someone said, “If my two legs are just within the door of heaven, I will be satisfied.” But is God satisfied? No. God will not be satisfied until one day, glory becomes your portion. Then He is happy. What God intends for you is glory. What is glory? Glory is when God can look at you and say, “This is how you ought to be. Now you are like My Son. You have been transformed. You are now conformed to the image of My Son. I am happy.” That is what God wants for you and for me.

The Key to Glory

How can it be? What is the key to glory? The key is: Christ in you. When you believe in the Lord Jesus, the very day you believe in the Lord Jesus, the key is given to you. Now this Christ in you can become the hope of glory. Hope is looking forward. Hope is possibility, potential, anticipation. Hope encourages you. No one can live without hope. If a person is without hope, what is the sense of living? But we have a hope, and the hope is glory. One day, Christ will lead many sons into glory. But how can He lead us into glory, unless He works glory into us first? Otherwise, you cannot stand the glory. No

one can see the face of God and live unless glory is wrought in him. Then he can see God face to face. One day, the Lord Jesus will lead many sons into glory, but today He is working that glory into you and into me to make us suitable for that day of glory. Isn't that wonderful?

The Way to Glory

How does God work that glory in you? Christ in you. Let Him live out His life in you. Let Him transform you and conform you to His own image; then there will be glory. John said: "See what love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God. For this reason the world knows us not, because it knew him not" (I John 3:1). And that is true. The Father has given His love to us that we should be called the children of God. We are the children of God. The world does not know because they do not know the Father. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and what we shall be has not yet been manifested; we know that if it is manifested we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (v.2).

We are now the children of God, but what we shall be will be manifested. And when it is manifested, we shall be like Him because we see Him as He is. In other

words, what God is doing for us and in us is to bring us into maturity, to be conformed to His Son, that we are no longer babes in Christ but we become sons and daughters, grown up in Christ. Or to put it another way: Christ is formed in us. His character, His nature is gradually formed within us. His gentleness, His love, His kindness, His faithfulness, His discipline—everything that Christ is becomes us. It is Christ in you; Christ formed in you; Christ seen through you. This is glory. And this is what God is doing.

But of course, it is not that simple. The reason it is not simple is because you and I are standing in the way. Even after we believe in the Lord Jesus there is that *I—my* opinion, *my* feeling, *my* thought, *my* way, *my* life. Our old self, our flesh wants to continue to live in the way it lived before, even after the Lord has come in us and dwells in us. And the Lord comes to us and says, "From now on, you do not need to live. I will live." But we say to the Lord, "No; get to the closet. I am going to live." Now, that is the problem, and because of this, there is no glory, only shame. For this reason, the way to glory is the cross, is suffering.

Look at our Lord Jesus. He is the perfect man. He has His personality, of course.

You remember His prayer in Gethsemane? "Not my will, but Thy will be done." He is not a man without a will. He has a will. God does not want us to be without a will. Our Lord Jesus, the perfect man has a will, but His will is always yielded to the Father's will, not like us. Our will is always against God's will, but our Lord Jesus was always yielding to the Father's will. He has His will, but He yields to the Father. And in doing that, He suffers, so far as the flesh is concerned, even though His flesh is without sin. In other words, He denies Himself all His life, and in denying one's self, there is suffering involved.

In Hebrews 5:8 it says, "Even though He were Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered." He learned obedience to the Father through the things which He suffered. He was willing to suffer, to allow Himself to die and let God be manifested. This is the way of the cross. This is the way our Lord has gone through, and this is the way that He leads us into glory.

Unless we are willing to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow the Lord, that hope of glory will be dashed. If we really look forward to glory, are we willing to let go of ourselves? Are we willing to lay down

our opinions? Are we willing to deny ourselves? Are we willing to let ourselves suffer a little bit, or sometimes, quite a lot? But, when we think of the momentary, light affliction that will gain for us that eternal weight of glory, then what does it matter? Christ in you is to bring you into glory, into all that He is—His nature, His character. He is there, determined to do this thing, but do you respond? Do you say, “No; I like to live my own life”? What a loss! Unfortunately, many of God’s children are short-sighted. They do not see what glory God has prepared for them. But remember, unless you allow

Him to glorify you now, you will not be comfortable in the glory that is coming where you will spend your eternity.

The apostle Paul said, “It is because of this I labor, that by all means I may present every man perfect in Christ.” God is for perfection. God wants us to be like Him. He has given us His Son, His life, and now He wants to fill us to the fullest. Are we open to this? May the Lord help us. It is not something beyond you. It is already in you. The hope is there. All you need to do is to say, “Lord, I offer myself as a living sacrifice. Do whatever is needed to transform me, conform me to the image of

Thy Beloved Son that You can look at me and say, ‘This is how it ought to be.’”

Shall we pray:

Lord speak by Thy Spirit to our inner man that we may hear and obey. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee, Thy thought concerning us is so glorious, so rich. Lord, have mercy upon us that we may not fail thee. Lord, we want to offer ourselves afresh to Thee this morning. Come and do anything that is necessary until Thou can say, ‘This is what it ought to be.’ To Thee be the glory. In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.
