

The Spirit's Revelation of Christ's Glory

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 16:12-15
Preached on: Sunday, May 31, 2015

I hope you join me with that desire to see his face as it is revealed in his word this morning. Join with me. Turn to John 16 as we continue to examine verse by verse this amazing Gospel message that reveals Jesus as the Son of God, the living Christ who gave himself for all who would believe in him.

This morning, we will be looking at verses 12 through 15 where we will understand more of the Spirit's revelation of Christ's glory. Follow along as I read Jesus' words beginning in verse 12 of John 16.

12 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine and shall disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you."

There is much ignorance and misunderstanding these days with respect to the Triune Godhead and, as a result, we see a lot of religion but frankly we see very little godliness. As if he lived in our modern era, Charles Spurgeon said this to his church in London in 1855, quote, "This generation hath gradually and almost imperceptibly become to a great extent a godless generation. One of the diseases of the present generation of mankind is their secret but deep seated godlessness by which they have so far departed from the knowledge of God." He went on to say, "Hence arises the sad fact that when you enter many of our places of worship, you will certainly hear the name of God mentioned but except in the benediction, you would scarcely know there was a Trinity."

I was recently at a wedding and there was much talk about God but the name of Jesus was never mentioned, nor was the Holy Spirit mentioned. This, of course, is religiously and politically correct in our day because even the most rank pagan can tolerate the mention of God, even an atheist can put up with it, especially if he is extolled for his love but you dare not mention Christ Jesus lest you begin to enter into the forbidden territory of that offensive Gospel. There is a huge push today as you probably hear in the news, to prevent police and military chaplains from praying in Jesus' name. Nor is it acceptable in many religious circles to talk about the Holy Spirit because he is so controversial. Nobody really understands how he operates. In light of all this, Spurgeon went on to add, quote, "My firm conviction is that in proportion as we have more regard for the sacred Godhead, the wondrous Trinity in unity, shall we see a greater display of God's power and a more glorious manifestation of his might in our churches. May God send us a

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Christ exalting, Spirit loving ministry men who shall proclaim God the Holy Ghost and all his offices and shall extoll God the Savior as the author and finisher of our faith, not neglecting that great God the Father of his people who before all worlds elected us in Christ his Son, justified us through his righteousness, and will inevitably preserve us and gather us together in one in the consummation of all things at the last great day."

Well, it is certainly my joy to be able to take you into the word of God this morning and in our text, we will see, once again, the unity of the Triune Godhead being exalted and we will have a special emphasis on the person and the work of the Holy Spirit who is perhaps the most misunderstood and certainly the least taught member of the Trinity which has resulted in many deceptions authored by the father of lies. But as we look at the bright sun of Jesus' words, we will see how the fog will begin to melt away and we will be able to understand him more clearly.

Let me take you once again to the eve of our Lord's betrayal, the eve of his crucifixion. Jesus is speaking to his 11 disciples. He is ministering to them on the eve of his arrest. And I continue to be deeply moved by this manifestation of selfless love even in the face of his imminent torture and his ignominious death on the cross. It's just a few hours away. He still focuses his love and attention on his disciples. In fact, John spoke of this earlier in chapter 13, verse 1, and mind you, John is thinking back some 50 years under the inspiration of the Spirit as he writes this. He remembers this as well. He says, "Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." Literally, to the uttermost. Certainly this reveals the heart of the Good Shepherd and how he loves the sheep and it also provides for us a supreme example of the type of concern we should show for one another.

Now, in his effort to encourage and comfort them, Jesus has gone into much detail concerning the coming Helper that would replace him. He has said in chapter 14, verse 26 that not only would the Spirit come to teach them "all things but also to bring to their remembrance all that he has said to them." The teaching as we will see, is a reference to the Spirit's work of illumination where he helps them and he helps us understand Scripture, a work that the Spirit of God does with us as well. But he also says that he will bring to remembrance the things that he has said to them. This is his work of inspiration, a work that the Spirit does not do with us.

Now, in chapter 16, we have the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking to them regarding his final self-disclosure that is about to be written in the New Testament, how he will be revealed in his word that is going to be written by the Spirit of truth, even as the Holy Spirit wrote the Old Testament. And as we dig beneath the surface of Jesus'

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words, we are going to quickly discover some magnificent veins of golden truths concerning the Holy Spirit that will enrich our souls with the revelation of Christ's glory. And it is my prayer, my sincere prayer that by the power of the Spirit, I will be able to help you mine as much of these wonderful nuggets of truth as possible so that together we can exalt him and avail ourselves of all of its benefits.

Now, this morning I'd like to approach this text, these words of Jesus regarding the Spirit's revelation of his glory, under 3 simple headings. We're going to look at, first of all, the scope of his revelation. Secondly, the source of his revelation. Finally, the subject of his revelation. Three "S's": scope, source and subject. Now, first of all, Jesus' introduction to this section is quite revealing. He is fully aware of the emotional frailty of his disciples with respect to his departure. He knew how easy it is going to be for them to allow their flesh to get the best of them. Earlier, probably an hour and a half or so earlier, he has washed their feet. He has exposed their jealous pride and their bickering over who is going to be first in the kingdom but here we see that he does not rebuke them but rather he comes alongside them as a father would come alongside his children and he addresses them with tender care, with patience, with compassion. Notice what he says in verse 12, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." Remember, they simply could not comprehend a dying Messiah. That did not fit into their theology, their eschatology. Nor could they fathom the implications of his death as it related to salvation. They could not fathom the idea of God's judgment upon Israel that was going to come and how God is going to turn to the Gentiles. They weren't ready to hear about the abrogation of the ceremonial law. They weren't ready to hear about the inauguration of the priesthood of the believer. They weren't ready to learn about the church or the numerous prophecies that the Spirit would later inspire them to write. Emotionally and spiritually, they were simply in no condition to understand all of these things until after Christ's death, after his resurrection and after his ascension into glory and after the Spirit of God came upon them at Pentecost. Only then were they able to receive these mysteries through the Spirit's inspiration and understand them because of the Spirit's work of illumination.

But Jesus says to them, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes," verse 13, "He will guide you into all the truth." Here, beloved, we have 1. The scope of his revelation. Look at it closely. Jesus says, "He will guide you," the subject is the apostles. It's not other believers. It's true that he guides us and I will explain that in a moment, but right now he is addressing the disciples, the apostles that the Spirit will inspire. "He will guide you into all the truth." "All the truth" refers to all of the truth that is going to be revealed and recorded in the New Testament and it's important for me to add that there is no more truth beyond this. This is the end of it. There is no more special definitive revelation from God apart from Scripture. Only the 66 books of the Bible comprise the total and the final

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revelation of God to man. Said differently: anyone who claims to have some direct new revelation from God, "God told me this, God told me that," that person is a fraud. That person is either self-deceived or Satanically deceived.

Notice verse 15, "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you." To the apostles through the inspiration of the Spirit. He's not disclosing new revelation to all believers. When that happens, you have utter chaos. This is why Jude exhorts us in Jude for 4, "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." It's for this reason that the final warning in Scripture, in the final words of Scripture, in the revelation of Jesus Christ, we have this solemn warning. In Revelation 22:18, we read, "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book." Sadly, this is a solemn warning that few people seem to take serious in these days of, "God told me this and God told me that."

So "all the truth" refers to the final revelation of God in Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit would reveal to the apostles who were being addressed here. The Spirit is going to inspire them to remember and to record an accurate record of all that Jesus said and then he is going to illumine their minds to help them understand all that he wanted them to know. His work of inspiration belonged only to the New Testament writers but his work of illumination is for all of us.

Let me dwell on these words for a moment so that there is no confusion. The term "inspiration" simply means that the words of Scripture are spoken by God. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God." "Inspired" means that it is breathed out by God so the words of the Bible are God's very words, both the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. You will recall when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus repeated citations from Deuteronomy in the Old Testament to answer every temptation. And in Matthew 4:4, Jesus says to the devil, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." That was obviously a reference to the Old Testament scriptures as well. Paul describes the Holy Spirit's work of inspiration in 1 Corinthians 2:9. He says, "But just as it is written, 'Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.' For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God."

So, Jesus is ultimately saying that because the Holy Spirit is God and has perfect knowledge of the truth, he is going to be the Helper that is going to come along and guide

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the disciples now into all the truth. Peter later described the Spirit's work of inspiration this way in 2 Peter 1:21. He says, "For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." The term "moved" in the original language is a term to describe the wind catching a sail and moving a ship along. Now mind you, when Jesus first explained this to Peter and the rest of the boys, they didn't get that. They didn't understand all of this but they did later.

This should cause all of us to rejoice, dear friends. The Spirit of truth has given us all the truth that we need in the revelation of his word. This is all that we need to know how to worship him. Where would we be if we didn't have the Bible? I asked our other campus that today. I said, "What would we be talking about if we didn't have the word of God?" And one person hollered out, "We'd all be arguing amongst ourselves," and that's probably true. But we have all that we need. In 2 Peter 1:2 and following, Peter rejoices in this. He says, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has," done something. What has his divine power done? "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." Think about that: our Creator, who is also our Redeemer, has not left us with an incomplete, insufficient, errant owner's manual. Now, for those of you men who tend to get the owner's manual before you put the stuff together, you will understand what I'm about to say. Don't you hate it when the owner's manual is incomplete? When they don't really explain what you need to know to put the thing together? We don't have that problem. God has given us all that we need. We have no need for more spiritual truth. We have all that we need in the Bible. It has been given to us by the Spirit of truth. In fact, within minutes of Jesus speaking these words, he would be in the garden praying to the Father, "Sanctify them in the truth. Thy word is truth."

You know, practically speaking, it's so sad when believers struggle in certain areas of their life because they either don't know what God has said about their situation or they know it but they refuse to take him seriously. They refuse to actually apply what he has said. Said differently: if you're miserable in your marriage today, God has the solution in his word. If you're frustrated over knowing how to raise your children, God has the solution in his word. If you're struggling with some life dominating sin, God has the solution in his word. If you're worried about the future, God can explain what's going to happen. And on and on it goes because his divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of him and that true knowledge of him comes from the Spirit of truth.

So Jesus promised that the Spirit would guide them into all the truth. They would understand it. They would write it. And then he would illumine them and illumine all of

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us to understand what he has already written. Now, what about this word "illumination"? It comes from a Greek word, photizo, which is rooted in a term "phos." We get our word "phosphorus" from that. It literally means "light." So "illumination" means "to enlighten; to cast light onto something so that we can see it, so that it is clear to our vision, our understanding." The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:4 that we are "illumined by the light of the Gospel." In 2 Timothy 1:10, Paul says that God has now "been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light," there is the same term. He brought to light "life and immortality through the gospel." In Ephesians 3:8, Paul says, "To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and," here it is, "to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church."

Now, you will recall that in 1 Corinthians 2:10 and following, that the natural man, the unconverted man, the man that has not been truly born again, does not accept the things from the Spirit of God. That text says that "they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because that person is spiritually appraised," a term that literally means "they lack the capacity to discern." They are unable to understand spiritual truth in such a way as to embrace it. But he goes on to say in verse 16, "we have the mind of Christ." And we have the mind of Christ because of the Spirit. The Spirit reveals the mind of Christ to us through the word so that we can know the very thoughts of our Lord. This is an amazing truth. I find the Spirit's work of helping me to understand and apply the word to be one of the most amazing and tangible blessings of his grace in my Christian life. There are times where I grapple with something in my life, trying to understand how to apply the word of God to it and there have been times where I have grappled with certain theological biblical concepts and then suddenly as I cry out to the Spirit for illumination, over time, sometimes it's suddenly, sometimes it takes time, he gives me eyes to see. Now, I will confess to you, sometimes I don't like what I see. It doesn't fit into my program. It doesn't go along with my line of thinking. But I can see it because the Spirit of God has illumined me. The indwelling Spirit is like a built in lie detector for true believers. In fact, we read in 1 John 2, beginning in verse 20, "But you have an anointing," he says, "from the Holy One, and you all know." He goes on in verse 27, "As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him." So he is saying that the Spirit helps us in our understanding, the truth, but we must walk in it.

Now, as a footnote here: be very careful, there are some that would read the text that I just read and say, "Well, this means that we don't need to study the word of God."

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Perhaps you have heard of God called preachers, Holy Ghost preachers, Spirit anointed preachers and these are ones that claim that studying and going to seminary and those types of things interferes with the work of the Spirit of God in preaching. I have heard them before, perhaps you have as well. I say this in kindness but it is absolutely pitiful to hear all of the rhythmic gasps and the strings of clichés, all of the repetition and emotion, terrible theology, words that for the most part are utterly bereft of hermeneutics. They butcher the text and for the most part the audiences have checked their brains at the door. You know, it's really a religious version of world wrestling. I mean, everybody knows that it's fake but it's entertaining and somehow it falls into the category of worship and preaching.

But folks, this is contrary to the Spirit of God and what he tells us to do. We're told for example in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." In fact, Peter tells us in 2 Peter 3:16 that there are some passages that are "hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort." It is for this reason that we need to study. We need to be good Bereans. It's for this reason that God, according to Ephesians 4, has given the church pastor teachers. He has called and equipped men to help with this. In fact, the English Puritans referred to their ministers as "physicians of the soul." By threat of imprisonment, no man was ever allowed to ascend to the sacred desk which is another word for pulpit. Remember, the pulpits used to be very high. No man was ever allowed to ascend that sacred desk and preach the word of God unless he had been trained rigorously and been ordained by other theologians in a very rigorous ordination process because they believed that the physician of the soul was even more important than the physician of the body. Think of the physician of the body that we have today. They go through rigorous training. They go through residency. They have to be board certified and so forth. You don't see people just going out and hanging up a shingle and saying, "Brain Surgeon," and people going to them. But we have that all the time in the church. How much more should a physician of the soul be affirmed and trained and sadly today, anybody that wants to call themselves a pastor can do it. Many, frankly, are nothing more than entrepreneurs at best, predators in pulpits at worst.

Well, back to our subject of the illuminating work of the Spirit. He is the one that gives us spiritual eyes. After we are born again, he gives us spiritual eyes to see the glory of Christ in his word. A. W. Pink offers a helpful analogy. Let me give it to you. He said, "Before he can see, man must have both sight and light. Eyes cannot see in the darkness, and light shows nothing to the blind. So with regard to the Truth: there must be the seeing eye and illuminating light. For an interpreter we need a trustworthy guide, an infallible teacher; and he is to be found not in the 'Church,' not the 'voice of tradition,' not the 'intuitive faculty,' or in reason, but in the Spirit of God. He it is who quickens, illumines, interprets,

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and the only instrument which He uses is the written Word. Therefore is He called 'the Spirit of the truth.'" And what a blessed thing it is to have this built in guide which, by the way, implies something very important. A guide is utterly useless unless you stay close to him and follow him and that's what we must do with the Spirit. We must walk by the Spirit so that we will not carry out the desires of the flesh and so forth. In fact, I would even recommend to you in your private time of worship to begin by echoing David's prayer for illumination. We read one of them in Psalm 25:4-5. He says, "Make me know Thy ways, O LORD; Teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth and teach me, For Thou art the God of my salvation; For Thee I wait all the day."

So again, Jesus makes this wonderful promise to his disciples, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth." This, my friends, is the scope of revelation. All the truth. The completed, the final truth that would be revealed and recorded in the New Testament. And I want you to notice something else: it says that, "He will guide you into all the truth." It doesn't say, "He will drive you into all the truth." No, he leads us. He exerts his influence upon our regenerated heart, upon our consciousness, so that we will follow him into all the truth. And will you also know that he doesn't say that, "He will guide you to all the truth," but rather, "He will guide you into all the truth." I may lead you to the entrance of a secret cave that is filled somewhere with hidden treasure and then leave you to yourself but it is something altogether different if I lead you into the cavern to that secret location. The Spirit does the latter, not the former.

Years ago, I remember numerous theologians, especially once I got into Bible school, even before seminary, numerous theologians and pastors led me to the doctrines of grace but they couldn't lead me into it. I found the 5 points of Calvinism to be exegetically correct. Ironclad. But they were aberrant to my way of thinking and abhorrent to my way of thinking. But in time, the Spirit did what no man could do. The Spirit led me into those truths that are so clearly presented in Scripture so that I could not only affirm them exegetically and biblically and theologically with respect to their accuracy, but I could embrace them with all of my heart and rejoice in them as some of the most humbling doctrines in all of Scripture. The same dynamic can take place in each of our lives. Many times a pastor or a Sunday school teacher or a parent will lead a person to the truth but then you stop there, only the Spirit then can lead you into the truth. By the way, we would all do well to remember this in our discipleship. Don't force people to believe that which they find offensive. Never force a man to drink if he is not thirsty. If you do, he will sputter and spit. You can lead a man to all the truth but only the Spirit can give him a hunger for that truth and lead him into all that truth. And I might add that very few men are ever convinced by heated argument, even if you win the argument. And even if a person reluctantly concedes, many times his heart may not be at peace with his mind. Someone has well said: A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.

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So folks, we teach people, we lead them to all the truth but then we pray that the Spirit will do what we cannot do and that is lead them into all the truth. Secondly, what is the source of the Spirit's revelation? Well, it says here in verse 13, Jesus says that, "He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you," referring to the disciples, "what is to come." Again, all of the revelation pertaining to the person and the work of Jesus Christ that is going to be recorded in the Gospels and then everything else that's going to be recorded in the New Testament.

In Romans 16:25, we read how that he would reveal to them "the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past." By the way, "mystery" speaks of not some type of a whodunit type of thing in a novel, but rather it refers to the revelation of something that has been previously hidden or unknown and the "mystery" he is referring to specifically here is the mystery of the Gospel whereby salvation will be made available to both Jew and Gentile. Paul goes on to say, even though it has been secret for long ages past, it is now "manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, it has now been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith."

You see, once again, keep in mind, the disciples are distraught. The Lord is leaving. They don't understand what on earth is happening. They are expecting the kingdom and yet the Lord has all these things that he wants them to understand. Think of just the mysteries that we have in the New Testament and think how this would be mind blowing to them had he begun to teach them right then. The New Testament reveals the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the mystery of Israel's hardening, the mystery of the Gospel, the mystery of the rapture, the mystery of God's will, the mystery that Jews and Gentiles would be one body in Christ, the mystery of the union of Christ and the church. Can you imagine giving all this to the disciples then? It is too much for them. The mystery of Christ's indwelling of believers. The mystery that the Messiah would be God incarnate. The mystery of lawlessness which will be fully revealed in the person of the antichrist. The mystery of faith. The mystery of godliness. They weren't ready for all of that but Jesus is saying, "That whatever the Spirit hears, he will speak and he will disclose these things to you." All that we need to know how to live for the glory of God, to understand Christ in all of his glory, to understand the church. All the magnificent truths pertaining to the kingdom and the consummation of all things.

So, just as Jesus never spoke or acted on his own initiative but always in harmony with the will of his Father, so too the Spirit. He will never speak independently of the Father or the Son. There is this unity within the Trinity and even as the Son came to serve the Father, what we have now is the Spirit coming to serve the Son. Now, I want you to

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follow the logic here: since the Spirit never spoke or acted on his own initiative but always disclosed only what he heard from the other members of the Triune Godhead, isn't it fair to say that what he spoke, in other words, the inspired word of God, must be inerrant? That makes sense to me. He is the Spirit of truth, not the Spirit of error. So I would argue that it is utterly irrational to believe the inspiration and yet deny the inerrancy of Scripture as some do because if the Bible contains errors, my friends, we do not have an authoritative word and that is a very slippery slope.

This is why we hold to the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. I would encourage you to read that. In fact, the preface states this, "The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority."

So, again, here we have the source of the Spirit's revelation, it's from God. He is God. He has heard it from the Lord Jesus and the Father as well. As D. A. Carson puts it so well, "He is doing little more than fleshing out the implications of God's triumphant self-disclosure in the person and work of his Son."

Well, finally, what is the subject of his revelation? Well, Jesus makes that very clear here in verse 14, "He shall glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you." In other words, the Spirit is going to come and he will unfold the glorious realities of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus which will include even Jesus' revelation pertaining to the Father. In verse 15 he says, "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you." Now, beloved, this is another powerful truth. Think about this: the Spirit's goal in the life of every believer is to help us understand the word of God so that we can glorify Christ and become more conformed to his likeness. That is just so simple and his desire is that we might see and know more of Christ, might experience his presence and live for his glory. This is so humbling to me. I mean, I am a nobody. We're all a bunch of nobodies. As Paul says, "Consider your calling, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble that no man should boast before God." I mean, I am a speck on a speck of a speck of a speck of a speck of a speck and it goes on and on. I am nothing and yet the God of glory would call me unto himself, would redeem me that he might inhabit me, to help me understand the word of truth, not only to be saved, but that I might glorify Christ and become conformed into his likeness so that someday I might be able to stand in the presence of his glory blameless with great joy. That is utterly astounding to me and I hope it is to you.

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Folks, if it's the Spirit's great ministry in our life to help us see the glory of Christ by showing him to us, should we not glorify Christ by showing him to others? Of course we should. 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul says, "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." It's the Spirit doing this work. Let me remind you of what's going on there in that text. This reaches back into the Old Testament when Moses had the distinct privilege of seeing a mere portion, a little glimpse of the backside. The Old Testament talks about the form of the God of glory. He could see his Shekinah, that dazzling light and in Exodus 34, we read how after being in God's presence, he had to put a veil over his face to shield the terrified Israelites from the effulgence of the glory of God refracting off of his face when he came back to the camp. Even that partial glory was overwhelming to them when they saw it. And in 2 Corinthians 3, Paul likens this to the diminishing nature of the glorious Mosaic covenant that would be replaced by the new covenant, the one would fade away and the light of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, would become the central figure in the new covenant. And now in this analogy that I just read in verse 18, he's telling us that all new covenant believers without distinction can see what Moses saw when he came into the presence of the Lord. When he did so, he would take the veil off and we are able to see with an unveiled face the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and we are able to see it because the Spirit of God discloses to us these magnificent truths. And one day to think we will see him in all of his glory.

The point is this: beloved, as you gaze into the word of God, you should see the glory of Christ because this is the great work of the Spirit in your life and this is the primary subject of his word. And through this, you become more like Christ. We are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind and that's what happens, the Spirit of God transforms us. He transforms the inner man and makes visible to us the living Christ. If I could put something to you very practically: if you read the word of God and you do not see the glory of Christ, there is something wrong with your perspective. You're probably reading it with a lens of self, "What's in this for me?" Rather than, "What does this tell me about my glorious Savior so that I might worship him come what may?" If you hear a sermon and somehow you leave and you realize that it never pointed you to the glory and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, either that sermon was preached in the flesh, not the Spirit, or you're hearing it in the flesh and not the Spirit.

Recently I talked with a man who was excited about a mega church that he was attending. He went into great detail extolling the virtues of his pastor's sermons. Then I noticed he kept describing his pastor as a guy that was absolutely hilarious, a great communicator and he said, "Like you, Dave, he preaches right from the Bible." Okay, good. But then he told me about a recent series that the pastor had taken them into. He said that, "It was very practical in helping me pursue my God-given dreams." Then he said, "You know, I

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The Spirit's Revelation of Christ's Glory

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never really thought about how God wants me to pursue my God-given dreams," and I'm thinking to myself, "Yeah, there is a reason why you probably never thought about that because that's not in the Bible." He gave me a book that the man had written. It has themes in it like: how to conquer fear and stop sitting on the sidelines of life; how to help you become all that you were created to be; how to help you discover the adventure you were born to live and actually live it.

I remember in talking with the man, I asked him at one point, "I'm curious, does he ever preached about Christ and the Gospel?" And his answer to me was this, "Define Gospel." That's all I needed to hear. Many people would say, "My pastor preaches right out of the Bible." Well, I hope so but there is a way of knowing that because be careful, there are many men who will preach out of the Bible but all they're doing is using the Bible to tell you what they want to say. If a man is truly preaching the word, Christ will be glorified and the people will be transformed into his likeness. If he's merely using the word for his own ends, man will be glorified and he will ultimately be conformed to the world. You show me a church where the majority of people are not lost in the wonder and the glory of the Gospel, where they are not growing in discipline, self-sacrificing love, where they have no hunger for the deep things of God, for the riches of the Scripture, where the people are not growing in holiness and effective witness and they have no longing to see their Savior face to face and I'll show you a church that is not hearing the Spirit of truth because it is the great role of the Spirit to proclaim to the people the glory of Christ through the word.

Every minister would do well to imitate the Holy Spirit and deal with these things: Christ and his glory, not man and his felt needs. If you look in the New Testament, whenever Christ preached, whenever others preached, they preached about the Gospel of Christ and his glory. They didn't tell us how to help us fulfill our God-given dreams, discover the adventure we were born to live and then live it and stop sitting on the sidelines of life. They didn't preach about politics and social justice and the elimination of poverty and income inequality and all this garbage that is being preached today. What they preached about was Christ and him crucified and him resurrected and ascended and exalted and coming again. Rich doctrinal truths. It's fascinating to see how the Spirit of God gives us a hunger for this, isn't it? Spurgeon called it, quote, "A sacred instinct within which will lead us to pry into the word and seek to understand it." What a wonderful blessing that is.

I close this morning by challenging you to have a vision of the glorified Christ in your life because this is what is going to motivate you to love and serve him come what may. Said differently: if you don't have that vision, you will falter and fail. You will recall that Isaiah in Isaiah 6 came before the Lord and he saw the pre-incarnate Christ in all of his glory and then the Lord told him later that, "If you're going to go and serve me, nobody is

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going to listen to you virtually. Hardly anybody will listen to you." And I've always wondered how could Isaiah go through his life knowing that the God of glory had told him that? And the reason is simple: it's because he had a vision of the glorified Christ. That's what motivated him.

I close with this story. In 1952, a long-distance swimmer by the name of Florence Chadwick slipped into the waters off the beach of Catalina Island and began to make her way to the coast of California. She was quite confident that she could do this because she had earlier been the first woman to swim the English Channel both ways. It was a chilly and foggy morning and she could barely see the boats that went alongside her. They said that after 15 hours of swimming, fatigue began to set in and she asked to be taken into the boat but her trainer refused telling her, "No, you can make it. The shore is not far away. Dig in! Hang in there! Keep trying!" And finally, being both physically and emotionally exhausted, she just gave up and stopped swimming and they had to grab her lest she drown. Unfortunately she was only half a mile away from the shore. The following morning at a news conference, she said something that I believe relates well to what we are studying here this morning. In effect she said this, quote, "I do not want to make excuses for myself. I am the one who asked to be pulled out. But I think that if I could have seen the shore, I would have made it." Two months later she proved her point by swimming the distance.

Oh, child of God, we need to see the shore. We all need a vision of our glorious God, our glorious Savior, Jesus Christ, to motivate us to become more like him, to serve him, to worship him, to honor him come what may. To reflect his glory to a lost and dying world. I challenge you to pray that the Spirit will do his work in you and give you that vision.

Let's pray together.

Father, we thank you for these eternal truths that speak so practically to our hearts. I pray, Spirit of truth, that you will help us to hide your word in our heart that we might have that clear vision of our glorified Savior and King in whose name I pray. Amen.

We pray you have been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.

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