

Since my childhood, Robert Murray McCheyne has been a family hero, as he has been throughout Scotland and in many parts of the world. *A Basket of Fragments* is one of the first books published by Christian Focus, over forty years ago. It is a treasure.

Read and you will see why. Here is heart-warming Gospel clarity with the passion of a loving heart. Saints comforted, sinners warned, Christ glorified and the cross of Christ central. Experience the record of holy unction, fervour, wisdom and love. As you read this, you will understand why my grandfather cherished three books: The Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress* and *A Basket of Fragments*.

I believe you will cherish this book also.

**WILLIAM MACKENZIE**

Managing Director, Christian Focus Publications

Do read these pages for the remarkable concern of a pastor for his people and for his intense awareness of eternal realities. The lost person will find the Way here, the disciple will find some fire that is easily lost, and the pastor will find a balance of tender care and uncommon courage for ministry. There are sentences in this book to chase careless and casual ideas far away – like his warning to some ‘you often told me of Christ but you did not tell me enough about my danger’ (p. 171). McCheyne tells both.

**SIMON MANCHESTER**

Senior minister, St Thomas' Church, North Sydney

I was in my last year of high school and working in the summer on a beach mission in Greystones. I thought the world of the leader and paid attention to all his comments. One day he talked of the biography of Robert Murray McCheyne, and what an extraordinary man he was, quoting an extract from McCheyne's diary, ‘Rose early and met him whom my soul loves. Who would not rise early to meet such company?’

I was gripped by the commendation and that quotation, and soon bought the book, and then everything I could find about M'Cheyne and his circle of friends, various biographies and the sermons. This book was one of my favourites, and some of the sermons are quite outstanding. Read and see for yourself what the transforming grace of God can work in the life of a young man.

**GEOFF THOMAS**

Conference speaker and author

The voice of McCheyne rings with a clarity born of a mind and heart in which the things of eternity hold greater sway than the things of time. Here is a mind controlled by the Word of God, and a heart set aflame by the Spirit of God. Here is a man with a clear sight of both the holiness of God and the beauty of Christ, coming from the divine presence and now seeking to convey to his people something of the worthiness of the Saviour. A pulsating love for God mingles with a tender affection for his people – an affection deep enough to drive home the incisive power of the Word with full force. These expositions demonstrate that the closest attention to the biblical text, far from hindering ‘relevance’, is the key to soul-penetrating application. The gospel speaks powerfully through these pages as the urgency of the call to repentance is conveyed to the unbeliever, the application of the gospel word is applied to the backslider, and the life of grace and godliness is impressed upon the believer. A sense of the nearness of eternity pervades McCheyne’s sermons, as he proclaims the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell. This is a model of truly biblical preaching – priceless truth delivered by a man on fire for God.

**ANDREW RANDALL**

Minister of Grace Church Larbert, Scotland

It must have seemed to many friends that after McCheyne's untimely death at 29, his ministry was over. But the Lord was, as it were, just beginning to use him. In the year after his passing his close companion, Andrew Bonar, wrote a superb Memoir and Remains, published by now in hundreds of thousands of copies. McCheyne's personal Bible-reading programme provides reading in one year through the complete Old Testament once and twice through the New Testament and Book of Psalms. Several other gatherings of his sermons have followed, including this delightful and enriching set of thirty-seven, first published five years after his death from notes taken down by his hearers. Reading these pages now is as if readers are sitting listening to this man whom the Lord has been using in remarkable ways – and still, in His grace, continues to do.

**TED DONNELLY**

Principal, Reformed Theological College, Belfast, Northern Ireland

In this *Basket of Fragments* of selected sermons by Robert M. McCheyne, we are treated to a banquet of gospel truth. Each message models biblical, Trinitarian, Christ-centered preaching which is doctrinal, clear, succinct, passionate, probing and pastoral in addressing all the various classes of hearer. McCheyne masterfully presents unseen and eternal realities as vividly plain and vitally present. Here is a preacher who pleads along with Paul, 'Be reconciled to God.' McCheyne's passion for Christ and for souls permeates every sermon. The Scottish 'Ah!' punctuates throughout (some 437 times!) as a token of McCheyne's own wonder, joy, and gratitude in the gospel, as well as his heartfelt pleading for his hearers to be saved and to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. While preached in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, these sermons are so biblical, they remain timelessly relevant for readers today.

**MATT KINGSWOOD**

Pastor, Russell Reformed Presbyterian Church, Ontario, Canada



A  
Basket  
of  
Fragments

Notes for Revival



Robert Murray  
McCheyne

CHRISTIAN  
HERITAGE

Scripture quotations are from the *King James Version* of the Bible. Some quotations taken directly from McCheyne's sermons reflect the *King James Version* but are worded differently. They have been left as McCheyne wrote them.

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## FOREWORD

*A Basket of Fragments* is not the most arresting book title that you may have ever encountered, but do not underestimate what you are holding in your hands. These are Christ-preoccupied sermons by one of the great preachers, and Christians, of the Church's history. Chances are, you've picked up this book because you know at least something of Robert Murray M'Cheyne (variously 'McCheyne'), who was a young, brief flame in the 19<sup>th</sup> century spiritual awakening in Scotland. Perhaps you are a preacher or ministerial student who heard about him through a conference speaker or a seminary lecture, or you read Andrew Bonar's *Memoir and Remains of R.M. M'Cheyne* and you decided that you wanted to read M'Cheyne for yourself. Or maybe you are a Christian looking for good devotional reading and you were led to M'Cheyne. Whatever the case you have come to green pastures and still waters.

The last two decades have seen a renewal of interest in M'Cheyne. In 2002, Christian Focus published an English translation of L. J. Van Valen's *Constrained by Love: A New*

*Biography on Robert Murray McCheyne*.<sup>1</sup> Not long thereafter, my friend David Robertson wrote *Awakening: The Life and Ministry of Robert Murray McCheyne*.<sup>2</sup> Another friend, Jordan Stone, has just written an outstanding work, *A Communion of Love: The Christ-Centered Spirituality of Robert Murray M'Cheyne*.<sup>3</sup> You will see and hear M'Cheyne quoted by J.I. Packer, Ajith Fernando, Alistair Begg, Sinclair Ferguson, Joel Beeke, Don Carson, Tim Keller and many other current evangelical leaders. Why?

Actually, I think you will discover the answer to that question in reading the contents of this book. M'Cheyne, like Samuel Rutherford before him, was animated by the love of Christ. As Jordan Stone says: 'He [M'Cheyne] fixed his eyes on Christ with uncommon passion. His life's ambition was to encourage every man, woman, boy, and girl to look upon Christ'.<sup>4</sup> You pick up this emphasis and hallmark in the very first sermon in this book, in its very first paragraph. M'Cheyne pleads: 'it is really the case that the only object in the world that can give peace to your soul is "Christ, and Him crucified."' Then he warns: "Those of you who are not awakened are in a great mistake in this matter; you think you have to find out something good in yourselves; ... you are seeking rest in the creature.' Then he proclaims: 'if anything will give you peace it is the getting a sight of His glory, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". It is just beholding His glory'.<sup>5</sup> This is vintage M'Cheyne.

M'Cheyne radiated this passion. It was not a pose but a living reality for him. It still comes through in his preaching. I think this is one reason that these messages still speak. They

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1 Van Valen, L. J., *Constrained by Love: A New Biography on Robert Murray McCheyne* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2002).

2 Robertson, David, *Awakening: The Life and Ministry of Robert Murray McCheyne* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2004).

3 Stone, Jordan, *A Communion of Love: The Christ-Centered Spirituality of Robert Murray M'Cheyne* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2018).

4 *A Communion of Love*, p. 2.

5 See pp. 15-16.

are both true to the Scriptures and they reflect the heart of a man who pursued holiness by pursuing communion with God through Christ. M'Cheyne is often quoted to the effect: 'My people's greatest need is my own holiness.' Apparently, he never said this, but the statement does capture something of his own convictions. Famously, he wrote: 'In great measure, according to the purity and perfections of the instrument, will be the success. It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God.'<sup>6</sup> Of course, the key is always God and His grace, but what M'Cheyne is pointing out is that a minister who is filled by God and His grace, a minister who treasures Christ above all, a minister who counts all things but loss in comparison to knowing Christ Jesus His Lord, is the most powerful instrument for proclaiming those truths. As Chaucer said of the poor parson in his prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*: 'He practiced first, then he preached.' M'Cheyne knew and loved Christ, and then declared Him, and yearned for others to know and love Him.

So, whether you are a Christian looking for rich, biblical, Gospel-filled, Christ-exalting devotional reading, or a pastor or ministry leader looking for help in preaching and teaching the truth of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone more powerfully, passionately and persuasively, this book is your friend. Because the preacher of these messages was a friend of God, by the grace of Christ, and wanted sinners from every tribe, tongue, people and nation to be brought into a communion of love with the Triune God, by looking in faith to Jesus.

Ligon Duncan

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John E. Richards Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology

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6 Quoted by Bonar, Andrew, *Memoirs and Remains of R. M. M'Cheyne* (London: Banner of Truth, 1966), p. 282.



# I

## THE WORD MADE FLESH

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth (John 1:14).*

You remember, brethren, when Philip went down to Samaria, it is said that he preached Christ unto them, and there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:5, 8). You remember that the apostle Paul says, 'I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified' (1 Cor. 2:2). Now, brethren, it is really the case that the only object in the world that can give peace to your soul is 'Christ, and Him crucified'.

Those of you who are not awakened are in a great mistake in this matter; you think you have to find out something good in yourselves; you little know, dear friends, that you are seeking rest in the creature, which if you could find it, you would make out that Christ has died in vain. It is for this reason that I have chosen this text tonight, though it is so deep and full that I approach it with fear and trembling; yet certain am I that if anything will give you peace it is the getting a sight

of His glory, 'the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'. It is just beholding His glory.

The first truth that is laid open here is the humiliation of the Son of God. It is laid down to us in two parts. First, 'The Word was made flesh.' Second, 'He dwelt among us.'

### **I. THE HUMILIATION OF THE SON OF GOD CONSISTED IN HIS BEING MADE FLESH.**

I do not stop to inquire why He is called 'the Word'. I would just remark that as the word of a man expresses the mind of a man, so Christ was revealed that He might express the mind of God.

Let us consider what is meant in His being made flesh.

It is not meant that *He really took a body without a soul*. We know that Christ, as He dwelt among us, had not only a body, but a soul – a loving, human soul: 'Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour' (John 12:27)

Now, brethren, I do not so much insist upon the word 'soul', as upon 'what shall I say?' Ah, this expresses the tenderness of a human soul. Speaking with reverence, I would say, there seems to be a holy perplexity in His mind: 'Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death' (Matt. 26:38). And then the next verse shows He had a human will: 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' From these passages, it is obvious that when it is said, 'The Word was made flesh', it is not meant that the Godhead was united to a human body without a soul.

Again, you are not to understand that it was a sinful body. The word 'flesh' is often used in this sense, thus: '... the flesh lusteth against the Spirit' (Gal. 5:17). Some have thought so, but it has not always this meaning; thus, in Ezekiel 36:26 it is

said, 'I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of *flesh*.'

And, again, we know quite well from the Word of God that Christ was holy. The angels said at His birth: 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God' (Luke 1:35). And we know that in His manhood He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26). And we are expressly told that the one thing in which He differed was that He was without sin (Heb. 4:15). And we are told that in dying, 'He offered himself without spot to God' (Heb. 9:14). Now, we know that it was His human soul and body He offered up to God. So it is true that His humanity was holy.

I come now to the real meaning of the words – that He who was the second Person in the Godhead, became one with a holy human soul, and with a body with our infirmities, such as thirst, pain, capable of tears, weariness, suffering etc., for so much is implied in the word 'flesh'. 'All flesh is grass.' This is spoken of our feebleness. 'The Word was made flesh.' Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. There were three great reasons.

The first was that He might *obey the law of God in the same nature that had broken the law*. When the devil had got man to trample the law beneath His feet, as if it had never been, he thought that the law would never lift its head again. Now, the Word was made flesh that He might obey it; and so it is said, 'God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law' (Gal. 4:4, 5). I remember explaining this once before to you. First, that He was made under the law that He might obey it. And then, He was made under the curse of the law that He might obey it. And then He was made under the curse of the law that He might endure it.

Now, it is to the first of these that I now speak, namely, that Christ might obey the law and do more honour to it, than if it had never been broken. This was one of the great reasons why He became flesh. If it had not been for this He might have visited the earth for an hour. But the reason why He had to stop so long was to show that it was a good law.

You know, brethren, if you look across the world, and if you take God's holy law and shed the light of it over the world, there is something overpowering to think how fearfully, His law has been broken; think of all the Sabbath-breaking there is in the world, and all the thefts, swearing, adultery, etc., all of these streaming over the world, and blotting out, as it were, the law. And oh, brethren, it is sweet to think it was worth the condescension of the Godhead becoming flesh to obey the law, so as to show to men and angels and devils that God's law was so much more honoured, than if it had never been broken.

The second reason why the Word was made flesh was *that He might die* – that He might bear the curse of the law:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Heb. 2:9)

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14).

In these two verses it is distinctly said that the Word was made flesh in order that He might die. You know, brethren, if He had remained in the bosom of the Father He could not have suffered – for the divine nature cannot suffer; but in order that He might die He must be made flesh. The reason why He took upon Him a body was that He might bear the curse. You

know we are under the curse; now, Christ took upon Him flesh, that He might bear the curse.

I would just mention the third reason why He was made flesh. It is *that He might have sympathy for men*.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God (Heb. 2:17).

Brethren, there are no persons that can have compassion as those who have felt like us. You know God said to the Jews, You shall be kind to strangers: 'for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt' (Exod. 23:9). So God says to Christ, 'You know the heart of a man.' This was one reason why He was made flesh. Those of you who are afflicted believers, you know what it is to have a friend that was tried in all points as you are.

## **2. I COME NOW TO THE OTHER PART OF HIS HUMILIATION, 'HE DWELT AMONG US'.**

In the Greek it is, 'he tabernacled among us, as in a tent.'

It is believed by divines that there is here an allusion to the tabernacle in the wilderness. And just as the tabernacle was the meeting place with God, so Christ is the meeting place between a sinner and God.

But further, it implies His going from place to place. You know this was the case with the tabernacle; so this was one of the parts of the humiliation of Christ. He was not only born, but born in a low condition, and His life was one of poverty. Why did He this? One reason was that He might sanctify affliction. Some say, 'I have not clothes to come to the church with.' My brethren, do you not know that Christ had not where to lay His head? Ah, my brethren, this is one reason why He dwelt among us as in a tent. Away with your excuses that you cannot come to the church because you have

no clothes; Christ was poor, though He might have chosen a palace. But here we see the glory that burst through His humiliation.

The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Some may perhaps ask, 'When He became flesh, did He cease to be God?' No, He did not. 'Then did He entirely veil His glory?' No. 'Then did all see it?' Oh, no. 'We beheld it.' True, His glory was seen by some that did not believe in Him. When angels saw His glory, you remember there was a star that appeared at His birth – outward, carnal eyes could see that star. And you remember as He sat in the temple disputing with the doctors, they were astonished at His words – all the world could see that glory. And you remember at the marriage of Cana of Galilee, He made the water into wine – outward, carnal eyes could see that. So with all His miracles. But this is not the glory spoken of here; at least it is not all the glory. What is this glory then? I answer, it was the glory of the divine perfections: divine wisdom, divine love, etc.

*There was the glory of the divine wisdom shining through Him.* Who could see it, but those whose eyes were open? Brethren, in all that He did He was bearing the sufferings of many. And oh, brethren, have you seen His glory? For this is the glory of the only begotten of the Father. Have you seen this glory? For this was the glory that shone through the Word made flesh. It was not only the star; it was not only the wisdom He showed in the temple; it was not only the miracles; it was not these so much as the plan of redemption – the scheme He accomplished, when He said, 'It is finished.' It was that that showed His wisdom.

*There was the love of the only begotten of the Father.* His very appearance in the manger at Bethlehem showed the love of the only begotten of the Father. Have you seen that love?

I would now begin to ask you the question: Have you beheld that glory? John says, 'We beheld it.' The first moment that a sinner is brought to peace is when he beholds a divine person bearing the curse due to him for sin. Then the soul says, 'Here will I rest.' Have you seen that glory? I know you cannot see it till your eyes are anointed.

### **3. LAST OF ALL, THE PROVISION FOUND IN CHRIST: 'FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.'**

Perhaps some here are saying, If Christ is so glorious, I cannot come to Him. I can only say, with Peter, 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord' (Luke 5:8). If it is true that all the perfections that dwell in the Father dwell in Christ, then I cannot come to Him – how can I come to Him? There is but one answer to that: 'He is full of grace and truth.'

I do not know if I can make it plainer; but the meaning is just this, that He is full of grace – grace for those that deserve wrath. Once He sat in Levi's house with publicans and sinners – how could they sit beside Him? Ah! The reason was, 'He was full of grace.' Brethren, I think I could say that you could not imagine a Saviour so suitable to your soul as Christ is. Some of you would perhaps wish that He was not so glorious – that He was not so just. Ah! Do you think that you could come to Him more easily if He were less just? Oh brethren, you could not imagine a more suitable Saviour than He is.

And then He is full of truth. 'The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ' (John 1:17). The law was a shadow, Christ is the substance. All that is in Christ is truth. The pardon He gives is true pardon. The peace He gives is true peace. Brethren, will you come to Him?

I would now invite all heavy laden sinners to come to Him; and I would give you two reasons why you should come. First, He is full of grace. Second, He is full of truth. My brethren, you need a divine Saviour, and yet you need one full of grace. Brethren, what Saviour can you imagine to yourself if Christ does not do? How graciously does He invite you to come.

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price (Isa. 55:1).

And if you will not come, then He comes to you and says:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Rev. 3:20).

How full of grace He must have been who said, 'Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man' (Prov. 8:4).

Consider how long you have lived without Him, trampled on His blood, despised His invitations, and yet He has waited all that time.

Consider how long you have provoked Him since you were awakened, making Him a liar by not believing His Word. Consider how long He has stood.

Brethren, He is full of grace, though He is full of glory. Will you not let Him save you? Is it much He asks of you? Will you not allow Him to justify you? Ah, brethren, if you do reject so gracious a Saviour, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' (Heb. 2:3). Surely, brethren, an eternity in hell will not be too much for those who despise the blood of Christ.

I beseech you, brethren, that you receive not the grace of God in vain. You do not know the guilt of man who will go away tonight despising Christ. You do not know the guilt and danger of despising Him who is so able, as well as so loving a Saviour. Amen.



## 2

# A FAITHFUL MINISTRY

*Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:1-6).*

It is five years today, brethren, since I began my ministry among you in this place. It will be good for us today to stand up in the sight of God and see how we have improved the years that are gone by.

**I. LET US OBSERVE, FIRST OF ALL, THAT FAITHFUL  
MINISTERS PREACH CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.**

Verse 5: 'For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.' Now there may be two things implied in preaching not ourselves.

- a) *We do not preach the fancies of ourselves, but the truth of Christ.*

Many men preach themselves – they preach their own theories. Many before the days of the apostles did this – they taught their own fancies. But when the apostles came they took a very different manner. Witness John the Baptist – 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29). So the apostles; they said, 'We are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree.' (Acts 10:39). And then you remember Philip, when he went down to Samaria, 'preached Christ unto them' (Acts 8:5). And this is exactly what John says in his first epistle: 'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you' (1 John 1:3). This is the very beginning, middle and end of a gospel ministry. And looking back on the five years we have been together, I think I can lay my hand upon my heart, and feebly think this is what I have done. And why should we do this? Because it is the most awakening truth in the world. One evening lately, I was passing by a building and I heard a man speaking, who seemed in earnest. I stopped and listened – he was preaching about laws and politics. I said that that man may preach to the day of judgement, but he will never make the people holy. But we preach Christ Jesus the Lord, that you may be made holy.

- b) *We do not preach ourselves as the end, but Christ.*

I believe that all worldly teachers preach themselves as the end; but this is not the object of faithful ministers. It is not that you may praise them; but Christ Jesus the Lord. Again,

looking back upon our ministry, though I am not more free from fault than other men, I would not be a minister another day, if it were only for a name. But if we are Christ's, He will make us preach Himself.

I sometimes feel, brethren, that I would willingly lie down beneath the sod in the churchyard, and be forgotten and trampled on, if only you were friends of Christ.

**2. LET US CONSIDER, SECONDLY, THAT ALL FAITHFUL MINISTERS PREACH FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.**

Verse 6: 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' There are many teachers, dear friends, and I believe them to be honest worldly men, who do not preach from personal experience; they have been brought up in the ministry, but they know not Christ; they speak like Balaam, of a star they have never seen (Num. 24:17). This was not the case with Paul. God had shone into his heart. Observe what he got – 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.' It was not a sight of Christ with the bodily eye. Many saw the face of Christ who will wail in hell. What was it then Paul got? God gave him a true, divine, spiritual knowledge of the power, love and beauty of Christ, that he could not but preach Him. O brethren, it was this that enabled him to preach among the Gentiles the 'unsearchable riches of Christ.' It was this that made him stand undaunted before Nero.

Brethren, can you say God has shined into your hearts? Observe where conversion comes from. It comes from God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. There was a time when the world was all in confusion. What could bring light on such a world? There came a still calm voice, saying, 'Let there be light', and there was light: such is conversion. 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,

hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' Can you say this? If not, you are still in darkness.

O brethren, pray that ministers may preach from personal experience. It is only those that see Christ that can make Him known. It is only when the living water is springing up that we can tell of the power that sanctifies. Pray, then, that we may have such ministers.

### **3. BUT I HASTEN TO THE THIRD POINT, AND THAT IS, THE MANNER OF A FAITHFUL MINISTER.**

Verse 1: 'Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not,' etc.

#### a) *We preach without fainting.*

There are many things that are apt to make a minister faint; no natural man could bear what faithful ministers do. One thing that is apt to make us faint is the reproach of the world. You remember what they called our Master, they called Him a 'winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners' (Matt. 11:19). These words are very bitter. And then again, I do not know anything more difficult to bear than the reproach of rich, worldly men; they look on all our endeavours to save them as hateful. Another thing is, when people leave our ministry; when they go away, and we have the sad thought concerning them that they went back and walked no more with Jesus. Another thing is seeing many of you staying, and yet living unconverted. Brethren, if there is anything that is like to make us faint, it is these things. I have often felt as if I were standing on the sand, and hearing a ship strike on the rock, I have cried that there was a rope, but the wave washed it by. How many have I seen pass away in this way! Ah! Brethren, that is enough to crush a man. Another thing is when we see some of you who are like the stony-ground hearers. But we faint not. I will tell you why we faint not. It is because it is so

sweet to preach. I would say with Henry, 'I would beg six days, to be allowed to preach the seventh.' Christ will be glorified though you are not saved: you will not wear the white robe, but many will.

b) *All faithful ministers preach holily.*

Verse 2: 'But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty', etc. There are many ministers who are outwardly ceremonious, but inwardly they are not so. But this was not the case with Paul. I believe that we could not preach if we had not an evil heart; but we have gone to the fountain, and got it washed; we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. Pray for holy ministers.

c) *We preach not deceitfully.*

Verse 2: 'Not handling the word of God deceitfully.' The Word of God is a dangerous thing; and I fear that many ministers handle the Word of God deceitfully, in not letting you see your state. How many times the very best do it! Ah! Brethren, pray that we may lead you where Paul led those he preached to.

**4. FOURTHLY, I COME NOW TO SHOW YOU THAT UNDER ALL FAITHFUL MINISTERS MANY WILL BE LOST.**

Verses 3-4: 'But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' Now, you will see from these words that Paul reckoned upon it that some of his hearers would be lost, and accordingly this was the case. When Paul came to Iconium the city was divided, and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles (Acts 14:4). And what is our experience? Is not this thing true of this congregation? Some have believed, some have believed not. What is the reason of it? Satan has blinded

your mind, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto you. Your lusts have been made a thick veil to hide the gospel from you. And what will be the end? You will be lost. Oh! Dreadful word – a lost soul! Lost to you believing friends; they will look around the innumerable company in heaven; but you will not be there! Lost to Christ – Christ will not own you! Lost to God – God will say, This is not mine. O brethren, are there any of you who have sat for five years under my ministry and yet are lost! Ah! Brethren, our gospel is hid to you, and you will be a lost soul to all eternity. All the angels could not tell you the misery of that – to be a lost soul! Amen.