

2 Corinthians 3:19-10

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[0:00] So we're in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, which is page 565, 2 Corinthians chapter 3, and 2 Corinthians is one of those books, I don't know whether you're noticing it as well, but there's an overlap in chapters and it's difficult to know when to start and when to stop because the themes seem to go on in the chapter.

I've noticed that's happening again today, and we look at chapter 3 tonight. When churches are looking for pastors, sometimes their expectations are not very realistic.

So according to one writer, when churches seek a new incumbent, they expect the strength of an eagle, the grace of a swan, the gentleness of a dove, the friendliness of a sparrow, and the night hours of an owl.

And then when they catch the bird, they expect him to live on the full of a canary. And often the expectations are unrealistic, isn't it? So I don't know whether you read the adverts for ministers at the back of evangelicals.

Sometimes what they're looking for is a 25 year old with 35 years of pastoral experience. I remember being sent the list, isn't it, of what IPC required.

[1:26] I thought it was a good degree. It was good. It was good, actually. But I'm very opportunistic, I'm very unrealistic. And Paul says at the end of chapter 2, verse 16, what every elder says. Every elder says, who is sufficient for such things? Who is competent for such a ministry?

For the ministry of the new covenant. For the ministry of making Christ love. And the apostle Paul is facing a barrage of criticism from the Corinthians. False leaders have come in.

And they're undermining his ministry. They have this amazing internet ministry on multi-site, isn't it? Isn't that the latest thing? And they've driven a wedge between Paul and his converts. And so you can imagine, can't you, his confidence has taken a battery.

And that is how it works, isn't it? It works for you in the same way when people criticize and complain about you, you begin to doubt yourself. And you begin to lose confidence in what you're doing. And even when you think that you were able to do well, you suddenly lose your confidence in doing that.

And particularly as these super apostles, as the apostle Paul calls them later on in the chapter. These super apostles, they've got such glowing references and such impressive CVs.

[2:40] And Paul's confidence is under attack. And yet look at what he says in verses 4 to 6 of chapter 3. Such is the confidence. Such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God.

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything that's coming from us. But our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant.

Why is Paul confident? Why is he so confident? It's not self-confidence. He says that very thing in verse 5. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything that's coming from us.

He's not confident in his own abilities. It's not in his DNA. It's not in his personality. There's some people that just have super confident personalities. It's not the apostle Paul.

It's not in his upbringing. Not in his parents' parenting skills. That makes him confident. It's nothing to do with any of that. His confidence, he says in verse 4, comes from God through Christ by the Spirit.

[3:43] Such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God. Do you see what this chapter is all about? It is all about confidence in gospel ministry. I wonder how confident are you tonight in the gospel?

In sharing the gospel with someone else. I've told this story before. I tell lots of my stories again and again because they're good. Right, but Spurgeon was once approached by one of his students.

And his student was very discouraged by his lack of success in preaching and in the ministry. And Spurgeon said, well young man, you certainly don't expect people to be converted every time you preach, do you?

The young man said, of course not. Spurgeon said, that's your problem. And it's our problem too, isn't it? We've lost our confidence in the gospel. We think we've got to sort of help it out a little bit. We've got to sort of supplement it. And we've got to add to it. We've got to make our meetings a bit more entertaining. Our ideas need to be more exciting.

[4 : 45] We need to brainstorm how we can capture a generation. But we've lost our confidence in the gospel itself. And we think we've got to help it out by kind of our clever sounding arguments.

Why should we be confident in the gospel? And Paul gives us two reasons in 2 Corinthians 3. We should be confident in the gospel, not in ourselves or our methods or anything like that. But confident in the gospel itself.

First of all because of what it is. And secondly because of what it does. Firstly what it is. If you look at verses 7-11 of chapter 3. If you just glance at those verses.

The key word, I don't know whether you picked it up. It's glory again, isn't it? Glorious. In just five verses Paul uses the word glory ten times. And he compares and he can trust.

He can trust the permanent glory. Which is to be found in the New Testament. The face of Jesus Christ. You see that in verse 6 of chapter 4. That's where he's heading. The light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.

[5 : 46] Who is the image of God. And he compares the permanent glory. Which is to be found in the Lord Jesus. With the passing fading glory. Which is seen in the face of Moses.

In Exodus chapter 34. Moses comes down the mountain. Do you remember that story? His face is shining. It's Paul's way of comparing the two covelets. The old and the new.

The Old Testament and the New Testament. The law and the gospel. Moses and Jesus. He's comparing these two arrangements. And of course. Anything to do with God is glorious, isn't it? Spectacularly glorious.

We must not think that the old. Is drab and dull and boring. And monotonous. It wasn't. It was spectacular. The way that God revealed himself.

On Mount Sinai to Moses. When you get home. Read Exodus 34. It is. It is breathtaking. If you'd have been there. You would have been impressed.

[6 : 46] The mountain quaked. There was thunder and lightning. And the sound of trumpets. And when Moses came down out of the cloud. We're told there in Exodus 34. That his face glowed.

With the glory of God. So much so that the people were terrified. And they had put a veil over his face. Because they were so frightened. They couldn't bear to look into Moses' face. Because it reflected something of the glory of God.

You see. It's the Ten Commandments. The moral law. Is a reflection of God's character. It shows us what God is like. And glory is simply.

The outward shining. Of what God is in his character. That's what glory is. It is the outward shining. Of what God is in his character. And the old covenant is glorious.

So you might have read some of the books. From the Lunatic Fringe. Marisky. Watching Raiders of the Lost Ark. I think this is in Raiders of the Lost Ark as well. That they tell you.

[7 : 45] That there was some kind of nuclear reaction. On Mount Sinai. You heard that? And they had to carry the Ten Commandments. In the Ark of the Covenant. And people had to be kept away from the Ark.

In case they got radiation sickness. But it's interesting isn't it? Moses was right there up in the clouds. And he lived for 120 years. No sign of leukemia. So this is not some kind of atomic radiation.

That Moses has got in Exodus 34. This is the glory of God. Come down to earth. And it is spectacularly glorious. Let me read you verses 7 to 11. Now if the ministry of death carved in letters of stone came with such glory.

But the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory. Which was being brought to an end. Will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? For if there is glory in the ministry of condemnation.

The ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. Indeed in this case. What once had glory has come to have no glory at all. Because of the glory that surpasses it. For if what was being

brought to an end with glory.

[8 : 48] Much more will what is permanent have glory. You see what Paul is doing? He's comparing and he's contrasting. And he brings out three points of comparison.

Between the old and the new. Between Moses and Jesus. Which shows you just how fortunate it is that you are living this side of the cross. How glorious the gospel is.

And the first comparison is that it is a ministry that brings life not death. Do you see that in verses 6-8? It's life not death. Who is made a sufficient ministry of a new covenant.

Not of the latter but of the Spirit. For the latter kills but the Spirit gives life. Now if the ministry of death carved in letters of stone. Came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face.

Because of its glory. Which was being brought to an end. Will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? Ministry means simply serving. Like a waiter in a restaurant.

[9 : 46] We're all ministers. Every single one of us. It's nothing to do with whether you wear a dog collar or not. Or whether you call yourself reverent. Ministry is serving. And we are all meant to be servants.

And the Old Testament ministry. The way people served God in the Old Testament. Was through the covenant that God gave to Moses. And through the Ten Commandments. Through the external code.

That was written down on letters of stone. But what Paul says. Then with the coming of Jesus things changed. We have a new way of serving God.

Which is not so much to do with externals. It has more to do with the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts. And that is the difference between life and death. The ministry of Moses verse 7 brought death.

That glorious revelation of God on Mount Sinai brought death. The letter kills. You can probably hear the story of the compulsive thief who got converted.

[10 : 49] On the first Sunday after he was converted he went to the church. It happened to be an Anglican church. And in many Anglican churches they have on the wall the creed. And the Ten Commandments. It's a good thing. And as the guy walked into church for the first time in his life.

He'd been converted just the previous week. He'd been a compulsive thief. It was his lifestyle. He didn't know how he was going to change. He didn't know if he could do anything different.

But he met with Jesus during the week. And he realised he had to go to church. He went into this church. And the first thing he saw when he went into this building on the wall behind the altar. Were the words thou shalt not steal.

And he said thank you God. Because he thought it was a promise. And it is a promise for us. Do you see what God had done in that man's life during the week?

He'd written his law on that man's heart. And what had been a commandment that he could not keep. What had been a commandment that brought death to him.

[11 : 45] What had been a commandment that condemned him. Now brought him life. It was the promise of God. The spirit had written it on his heart. You don't have to steal anymore.

You don't have to live that lifestyle anymore. Thou shalt not steal. Do you see how much more glorious it is to be under the gospel. Than it is to be under the law.

So there is a contrast between life and death. Then there is a contrast between righteousness being in the right. And condemnation. If the ministry that condemns man.

Carved in letters of stone. Came with such glory. That the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face. Because of its glory. Which was being brought to an end. Will not the ministry of the spirit have even more glory?

If the ministry that condemns man. How much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness? So Moses. Do you remember when he brought the law. Down from the mountain.

[12 : 45] Having received the law from God. His face shone. His face shone with the reflected glory of God. And terrified them. They couldn't look into his face. He had to cover it with a veil.

That is what we're told. The glory of God was coming down to Mount Sinai. And it is reflected in Moses. But they are terrified. It brings condemnation. It will destroy them.

Listen to how one theologian quotes it. He says this. The glory could not come down. Before Jesus had made the supreme sacrifice for himself. And the sacrifice had been accepted.

As the father raises his son bodily. To show his acceptance. Of all that Jesus did for our humanity. If the full glory had come upon human nature.

Before Jesus became incarnate. In order to unite our humanity. To his holy life. Atoning death. Glorious life. Resurrection and ascension. Our naked human nature.

[13:43] Would have been blown apart. By the fullness of the Holy Spirit. We couldn't handle the glory of God. Until Jesus came. Okay. Without the miraculous adaptation.

That occurs in this. Incarnational union. I'm trying to say that. That we could not handle the glory of God. Until the God man had come to earth.

Does that make sense? If God had put his glory into people before Christ. And adapted our humanity into himself. To receive the glory of God. It would have just short circuited us.

Our human nature would have destroyed it. We could not handle the glory of God. So the Lord Jesus has made it possible. For the glory of God to come into us. Without it destroying us.

And to come into us. In order to transform us. Because we know, don't we? In Christ. The written demands of God's law. Are fulfilled.

[14:43] He lived the life. That the law demands. But we can't live it. He lived that life perfectly.

A life of perfect obedience. To his father. Under the law. And in Christ. The penalty has been paid. He has taken it. Into himself.

The punishment for our sin. That we deserve. He has taken. Into himself. He has borne that on the cross. So do you see the difference. Between the old and the new. You say.

I'd have loved to have been there. On Mount Sinai. Here is the thunder. And the lightning. And see the cloud. The Shekinah cloud. I'd love to have wandered around the desert. With the Shekinah of God's glory.

Leading away. Can you imagine that? Would it have been wonderful? No it wouldn't. It would have been terrifying. Glorious as the Old Testament is. As the Old Covenant is.

[15:39] It doesn't compare with the new. It's the difference. Between life and death. Between condemnation. And righteousness. And it is the difference.

Between something that is permanent. And something that is passing away. You see that. Look at verse 7. Verse 7. Now if the ministry of death. Carved in letters of stone.

Came with such glory. That the Israelites could not gaze. At Moses face. Because of its glory. Which was being brought to an end. And then on to.

And verse 11. For if what was being brought to an end. Came with glory. Much more. Will what is permanent. Have glory. There's an article this week.

About. You know. The two new iPads. Something came out this week. And it was talking about. When Steve Jobs. Unveiled one of his iPads. And the line Steve Jobs. Came out with. Was this. Not since Moses.

[16:36] Came down from Mount Sinai. With the Ten Commandments. Has there been so much hype. About a tablet. You know. If you were an Apple. If you were an Apple person. You would have been very excited this week.

Maybe you got them. I don't know. But if I was silly enough. Silly enough to go and buy one. Then no sooner would I have opened the box. Then it would have been obsolete. Isn't that the problem with technology?

Spectacular though it is. Impressive as it is. All the superlatives. That Apple used. To introduce a new product. As soon as you open the box.

On new technology. It's fading away. It's passing away. It has become obsolete. And the old covenant is like that. That is what Paul is saying.

The ministry of Moses. Was never meant to last. It was always destined to pass away. Because something else was coming. Something more permanent. Something much more glorious was coming.

[17:34] The old arrangement is spectacular. It is glorious. No other nation ever had anything like it. It was God revealing himself to the Jews. To Israel. But now the son of righteousness has arisen.

It's a bit like I said. Noah has got a clock in his room. You know these clocks. These great things. We should give this as a baptismal gift to people. That they have a clock. Where the sun comes up. And they're not allowed to get out. Until the sun comes up. It is. Whoever thought you'd be given a Nobel Prize. And so they wait there. Until the light has come up. And all our children sing.

Bless the Lord. Oh my soul. The sun comes up. There's a new day tolling in the morning. Which is slightly infuriating. But the sun comes up. And they come into our room. But in the winter.

When the sun comes up. You've got this little lamp. This little clock that is bright. But when you go and you open the curtains. And the light has faded away.

[18 : 34] Isn't it? You know what that's like. Isn't it? You have a light in a room. In a dark room. A little light. It comes up. And it's glorious. It fills the room with light. And then you open the curtains. And there's light outside. Well it's been surpassed.

Isn't it? You don't need it. You don't need it. Because the greater has come. And that is what's happened here. The glory of Moses has been surpassed.

The sun of righteousness has risen with healing in his wings. All of it is gone. And you don't even see it anymore. Do you? When you open the windows and it's light outside. You can't even see that the light is on. And you don't see the glory of Moses even anymore.

Because of the all-surpassing glory that is ours in Christ Jesus. Now let me try and apply this. What does the gospel do? Look at verse 12.

Verse 12. Verse 12 is unhelpful. There should be a therefore at the start of verse 12. It says since in 2 Corinthians 4. It should say therefore. And what Paul does from 12 to 18.

[19 : 36] Is he applies it to his own life and ministry. Since we have such a hope. We are very bold. The glory of the gospel makes sinners bold.

And it makes sinners confident. The word literally is free. I like that. Therefore. Since we have such a hope. We are very free.

Free to speak. Shouldn't you love it? When you're with people. And you're free to speak your mind. It's a word that sometimes you use. It's an outspokenness.

You know. We're invited to it. Aren't we? Hebrews 4. Don't you love that? We are to boldly come before the throne of grace. We're to come to the throne of grace.

And speak your mind. The Lord says. Come freely speaking your mind. God says in Hebrews 4. Oh nothing back. And Paul is saying. That is the effect on me.

[20 : 37] As a preacher. Look at verse 12. Therefore. Since we have a hope. We are very bold. We are outspoken. When it comes to the gospel. We are free to speak our mind. We are bold. Why such boldness?

Well it's because of what the gospel can do in a person's life. Do you see that in verse 18? It's such a fantastic verse. Isn't it? Verse 18. Verse 18.

And we all with unveiled faces. Beholding the glory of the Lord. Are being transformed into the same image. From one degree of glory to another.

For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. What does the gospel do? Verse 18 again. It changes people. It actually. Literally.

It metamorphosizes people. It transfigures people. You know the story of the transfiguration?

[21 : 31] Remember that story? There's two mountains aren't there? There's Mount Sinai. Where Moses' face shone. Where God's glory was reflected. Think about that. The glory of God bounced off Moses' face.

But on the Mount of Transfiguration. The glory of God did not bounce off Jesus' face. It shone out from the face of Jesus. He was transfigured.

And there is a sense where that happens when you believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus. That takes place in our lives. We are transfigured. So it's like the little boy who said to a Sunday school teacher.

The Sunday school teacher said. What is a saint? He's obviously an Anglican. He'd been used to stained glass windows. And he said a saint is someone that the light shines through. That is right. That is exactly right.

That is gloriously true. That is the difference between the old and the new. The old is passing. It is temporary. It is feeding. That is how you know, isn't it?

[22 : 34] That is how you know a real Christian. From somebody who just comes in amongst Christians. Not some moment of glory. Not some passing experience. But there is a change. There is a metamorphosis going on.

What happens to the hungry caterpillar? The hungry caterpillar? The hungry caterpillar. He eats and eats and eats and eats. What happens to the hungry caterpillar when he gets really fat and eats that leaf?

What happens to the hungry caterpillar? He gets really fat. What does he go into? Do you know when he goes into a yes, Noah? He just gets, you know, a good group of you all night.

What happens? Yes, yes, yes. Alan, what do you think, Rebecca? What happens? What does he, what does he, what happens? That's exactly right, isn't it?

There's a change, isn't there? There's a metamorphosis. It's a big word. You can use that when you go to school tomorrow. And that's what happens in the Christian life. There is a change.

[23 : 37] A transfiguration happening. You, who have believed in Jesus Christ, there is a change happening. What happens? You see, this is it, isn't it? If somebody who never changes. That person is not a Christian.

The light is actually shining through that person. What does that look like? Does that look really spooky? Does that look kind of spiritual? No, no, no.

It's something very human, isn't it? Very, very human. The holiest people have been the most human people. It's very important to remember that. The holiest people have been often the most human people.

But, you know, I won't go there. Spurgeon said this. It would be a great pity if in the process of being qualified for the next life, we become disqualified for this life.

If it were not so, it would be very strange. Indeed, if becoming fit for the company of angels, we become unfit for the company of men. But it is not so. There are people like that, aren't they?

[24 : 42] They're so spiritual. They can't mix with ordinary human beings. But that is not holiness. That's a lovely poem, isn't it?

I've quoted this before. Not merely in the words you say. Not only in the deeds confessed. But in the most unconscious way is Christ expressed. Is it a beautiful smile?

A holy light upon the brow? Oh no, I felt his presence while you laughed just now. For me, it was not the truth you taught. To you so clear. To me so dim.

But when you came to me, you brought a sense of him. And from your life he beckons me. And from your heart his life is shed. Till I lose sight of you and see the Christ instead.

That is the transfiguration. That is what the gospel does in a person's life. It doesn't make you less human. It makes you more human. Because Christ is the most human of all, isn't he?

[25 : 42] Christ is the most human of human beings. When it says we are made in the image of God. Christ is the image of God. And that image is being marred in us.

And what God is doing in you as a Christian. Is through the gospel. God is restoring that image. He is reconstructing us. I was at a hotel once in the US.

And I was scaffolding around the place. And they said this. Please be patient with us. We are under reconstruction. But that is the church. He said we should put a sign up with that one. As you come in the door.

Please be patient with us. We are under reconstruction. That is what God is doing in your life. He is reconstructing the image of Christ in our lives. So if you want to know what shape holiness looks like.

You don't look on a checklist on a wall. You don't look at letters of stone. You look into the face of Jesus. And where do you see the face of Jesus? On the pages of the New Testament.

[26 : 44] And as you gaze into the face of Jesus. Paul says. Well look at what he says. He says. And we. With unveiled faces. We with unveiled faces.

All reflect the Lord's glory. Beholding the glory of the Lord. Verse 18. And being transformed in the same image. From one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. Let me try and wrap this up. The only person. With a shining face in the Old Testament is Moses. He is the only one. He is the man with the shining face.

And it is shone with the glory of God. But when you come to the New Testament. Every one of God's people. Will have the glory of God. Shining in their life and their character.

Do you see that in verse 18? Just look at verse 18. I am so grateful for that third word. And we all. And we all.

[27 : 44] All of us. All of us. Not. Not. Grade A Christians. Not. Super. Christians. We all. When Moses came down the mountain.

The glory was already fading away. He didn't want the people to see that. So he put a veil over his face. But of course. That glory had faded. But the glory of the Holy Spirit. Working in us. Is permanent and increasing.

Do you see that in verse 18? Ever increasing glory. From one degree of glory. To another. Which comes from the Lord.

Who is the Spirit. Changed from glory into glory. Until. At last we see his face. And of course. The glory that touched Moses.

Was an outward. Physical reflection. But the glory. Which the Holy Spirit. Creates in you and I. Is this inward. Spiritual transformation. So William Temple.

[28 : 42] Asked me to recount me. In the second century. He said this. You can show me a piece of literature. Second World War. Sorry. You can show me a piece of literature. Like Shakespeare's Macbeth.

But you can't expect me. To write something like that. You can play something like. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. And I can revel in the glory. Of the music. But you can't expect me. To write a piece of music.

Like that. Ah he said. But if the spirit of Shakespeare. Could live in me. Then I probably could. Write literature like that. And if the spirit of Beethoven.

Could come and live in me. Then I could compose music. Like that. And if the spirit of Jesus. Could come and live in me. Then I could live like that. And that is exactly what happens. When you believe the gospel.

Isn't it? Under the old covenant. You see what God requires. You see it. But you can't live up to it. But under the gospel. The spirit comes.

[29 : 37] And writes on your heart. Those laws. The spirit of Jesus. Comes to live in you. Isn't that the secret. Of Christian holiness. It's the doctrine of the spirit. That is why the Holy Spirit.

Is referred to in the New Testament. As the spirit of Jesus. That is how Jesus lives in you. Jesus is not here tonight. He is in heaven. As Rabbi Duncan said.

The dust of earth. Is on the throne of heaven. That is the reality. That is where Jesus is. He's ascended. Glorified. Seated to the right hand of God. There is a man glory tonight.

The dust of earth. Is on the throne of the universe. But he lives here. He lives here. In this little life. In this heart of yours. By the spirit. Whom he's given. So the children's chorus. Is right. Isn't it? Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full. In his wonderful face. The things of earth.

[30 : 34] Will go strangely dim. In the light of his glory. And grace. And that is the secret. Of the Christian life. It's not trying to pull yourself up. By the bootstraps. It's not trying hard.

That is terrifying. Isn't it? It is simply looking to Jesus. You know. The ancient Greek. Mythology. Isn't it? Medusa. See that.

BBC from Atlantis. Medusa. Snakes on her head. She looked so hideous. Didn't she? And everyone. Who looked to Medusa. In the face.

Was turned into stone. The face of Jesus. Is so glorious. It is so wonderful. And when God. Takes the veil away.

From our hearts. And opens our eyes. To see Jesus. In the pages of the New Testament. And we look into his face. It changes you. It changes you.

[31 : 26] Into his likeness. The apostle John. Says it does not appear. It doesn't yet appear. What we shall be. You know. There is something.

Even more glorious. Coming. Isn't there? The old covenant. Was spectacularly glorious. But now. In the gospel age. We have glory. That surpasses that. But there is even more glory.

Coming. When we shall see Jesus. As he is. And when we see him. We shall be like him. Without losing our individuality.

We will not be close. But we will be like him. Changed from glory. Into glory. And it is all a matter of focus. Where do we turn our eyes? What do we see? So do you see why Paul is confident?

He is confident in the gospel. Not the music. Not the methods. Or the programs. Or the aesthetics. Or the building project. Or the arguments. Let me finish with this.

[32 : 22] If you invited someone for a meal. And you wanted to impress them. What would you do? What would I do? Let's leave Claire out of it for a moment. But if I was inviting someone around for a meal.

And I wanted to impress them. What would I do? I'd take them to a restaurant. Because if it depended on my cooking ability. They would not be impressed. If Claire was around.

It would be a different story. But if you see what Paul is saying. Paul is saying it's not a matter of my cooking ability. It's not a matter of. I'm a better communicator than the super apostles are.

I've got a charismatic personality. I've got a powerful personality. And these new leaders who have come to Corinth. It's not about that. That is not where our confidence is. Our confidence is in God.

Through Christ.

It is outside of ourselves. It is in the message you see. And I think the church in the UK have lost that. They've lost confidence in this glorious message of the gospel.

[33 : 20] So maybe tonight you're not a Christian. And it is great that you're here. And our aim in this church is not to trick you. Into believing against your will.

We don't want to manipulate your emotions. Our aim here Sunday by Sunday. It's very simple. Is to open the Bible. And preach Jesus. And let God do his work in your heart.

And your mind. And you're not yet a Christian. Are you ready to give it a go? If you're serious. And you really want to become a Christian. Any of the Christians here.

Would be delighted to meet with you. And read the Bible with you. So that you could see Jesus. So that you could look into the face of Jesus. And he'll shine into your heart.

To give you the knowledge of the light of the glory of God. At the face of Jesus Christ. Because that is what happens when you become a Christian. Isn't it? So it happened to me. I don't camp.

[34 : 16] Somebody was speaking about how they became a Christian. With some odd, odd stories. Full of bizarre things that had happened to him. But he quoted a line of a hymn. Love so amazing.

So divine. Demands my soul. My life. My all. And God took the verse of that hymn. And he shone a shaft of light. And God spoke into my darkness. And brought me to life.

And I realised that whatever it was. That meant to be born again. I wasn't. I needed to be born again. And it wasn't about that man's abilities. He's not the brightest fella. It wasn't about that man's eloquence.

It was God who does it. And so tonight. Maybe you are a Christian. But you're not very confident. You're not very confident about the gospel. Well it changed your life didn't it?

Why can't it change someone else's? You are not the apostle Paul. And neither am I. But we have the same message. Maybe you are Christianised.

[35 : 15] That's easy to happen in a church like this. You understand what I mean by that. You've come for a while. And you've become Christianised. You know the story. Actually. You know about Jesus.

And you sort of believe. But there's a veil. Over your heart. And God hasn't removed the veil. You believe it. You're excited. You believe it. You accept it. But you're not excited about him.

As other people seem to me. And the Bible hasn't opened up for you. For the great news tonight. Is this. God can remove that. Can't he? God can take away the veil from your heart.

So that you will see who the Lord Jesus really is. And be transformed. And be transfigured. Let's pray.