

# The Hidden Things of God – Part 2

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Review what we covered last evening. If there are those of you who are concerned who missed the service, I would suggest you ask for a tape and that will bring it into focus.

The text we're using for these sessions together is in 1 Corinthians, chapter two, and verse seven:

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.”

I want you to turn to Ephesians. Perhaps more than any other Epistle or any other book in the Bible, Ephesians gives to us the unfolding of this hidden wisdom. This truth hidden in the heart of God, revealed, for that's the meaning of the word mystery, something previously covered and now uncovered. It's not something mysterious, but something which is unfolded. So it is that Ephesians should be really the Epistle of Mystery.

I want you to notice the first verse to whom Paul is writing. Our purpose in considering this, is The Hidden Things of God, that which God has revealed finally or is in the process of revealing or will reveal. Here in Ephesians, the first chapter and the first verse, “Paul *declares himself* an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God to the saints, which are at Ephesus, and of the faithful in Christ Jesus.”

Now let's get something clear right at the outset. Ephesus was not a saintly town. It was not in any sense to be thought of as the Vatican of spiritual purity and holiness. In fact, the practices in Ephesus were so vile, so sensual, so immoral, that we cannot even read in public gathering the inscriptions from some of the public monuments. It was a wholly given up to the worship of Diana of Ephesians and it was glorification of sensuality. Now, into that fetid swamp came the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You'll recall how that one occasion Paul met some that had been baptized and were followers of John. He examined them, satisfied that they truly believed in Christ, and he baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus. Subsequently, on another occasion in Acts, he told about his ministry in Ephesus when he said, “I was with you night and day from house to house, teaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Act. 20:20-21). Now, it is obviously that the people in Ephesus were not the victims of easy believism. There was something real, something genuine, something remarkable about the conversion of these people. We find it here in the first verse when he says that “they are saints at Ephesus,” he didn't use that word lightly, “and faithful in Christ Jesus.” In the 15th verse, he said, “When I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love unto all the saints, I cease not to give thanks for you” (Eph. 1:15-16).

There was something remarkably genuine about the work of God in these people, but they were not only people that had been awakened by the Holy Ghost, convicted of their sin, brought to repentance, and savingly believed on the Lord Jesus Christ through the transformation of their lives. But they were also people, we find, when Paul met them that he prayed for them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Here are a people born of God and filled with the Spirit of God. These are the ones to whom now he writes.

Bear in mind this, that in the New Testament all the warnings and all the exhortations and all of the teachings are given to people who have been born again and filled with the Holy Spirit because that's the only kind of people you have in the New Testament. There were not any other kinds. So it is that to this people, Paul now is going to bring something that is beyond awakening, beyond conviction, beyond repentance, beyond faith in Christ, beyond the witness of the Spirit and beyond being filled with the Spirit. You say, “Is there anything beyond that?” Well, Paul thought so and the Holy Spirit thought so. The Epistle to the Ephesians is given to the express purpose that we'll begin to think so. We should read it with that in view.

So he says as he has addressed them, “Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:2). Always it's that way, grace first and then peace. No peace apart from grace. Because God's grace is so magnificent, so

munificent then so rich in every way, we are not surprised to see the third verse. Look at it carefully. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings" (Eph. 1:3). Where? On earth and during time now. Now, is that what he says? I must be reading from reversed vision, don't you think? I read from that many times in the past, because it seems to me that's the whole thing is organized, all the blessing is to come horizontally to us. But Paul is not introducing us to the fact that all spiritually blessing are hidden. These are some of the hidden things of God, hidden blessings. Where is the place of God's blessing? Look at it carefully. The place, "... Has blessed us with all spiritually blessings in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). Well, what do we have here on earth apart from the fact that it's while we're here that we do understand what it is to abide in the heavenlies. There are many things that we can have without ever experiencing these spiritual blessings, while we can have soulish blessings, tremendous joy and delight at sunrise and sunset and beautiful views and rainbows and music and poetry and great art. All these things have enriched my soul.

I was in a meeting down in South Carolina. I went to the service. There weren't as many people there as the pastor said that the night before, they'd had an all-night sing. I don't think you out here know what an all-night sing is. That's when they get six or seven or eight quartets that come. They actually sing all night long. Break up about 5:00 or 6:00 Sunday morning. The hostess where I had lunch that day said, "I didn't get to the service today, preacher. I was at the all-night sing last night, and I didn't wake up. I just woke up in time to get our dinner today." "But," she said, "I want you to know that I got a great blessing out of that night of singing." "Oh," I said, "How did you ... You want me to know it. How do you know you got a great blessing?" "Well," she said, "I just enjoyed seeing parson so and so sitting up there a patten' the floor to that song. Everyone was just a feelin' so good as we were singing through the hours of the night." I didn't for a moment discount it or try and throw cold water on it.

She'd only had one thing, she described soulish blessing, not spiritual blessing. Her soul has been blessed. That happens to us and that's what we can expect. Where the tragedy comes in when people don't distinguish between soulish blessings and spiritual blessings. They can't tell the difference. That's pathetic, because they just might a mistake and go through all of their lives and never have experienced spiritual blessings. They may have been satisfied and addicted to soulish blessings. There is a difference. You see, man is body, soul, and spirit. The soul is the union of the spirit with the body. It's that relationship that we have to world around us and all that's in it, but the spiritual blessings are that part of us that relates to the heavenly blessings of God to the Holy Spirit and what He is doing. We must distinguish between the two.

The place of God's blessings is hidden. It might be inside the church in a time of service or worship, but it isn't necessarily there. If truth comes to enlighten the mind, and the heart responds to that truth, and it presses out beyond the mental, the emotional, and the soulish, there can be spiritual blessings. But He says, "He's blesses us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies." What we're talking about, then, are the hidden things of God. The spiritual blessings, therefore, are hidden. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the mind of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His spirit" (I Cor. 2:9-10). "The natural man receiveth not the things that are of God" (I Cor. 2:14a).

How easy it is for us as pastors with our need to congregations that are going to stand with us and support our work to make concessions, concessions that will make blessing available to the people who don't have spiritual discernment. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). The place of God's blessing is hidden. It's in the heavenlies in Christ.

Now, it's important for us to understand the author of God's blessings. Obviously, it's God. The next verses in *Ephesians chapter 1*, verses 4-14, tell us the part that each person of the Godhead had in the blessings that are ours in Christ. For in the fourth verse, we find that he says, "According as He as God has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:4-6).

What did that say? It said this, before the world was, God the Father purposed to have children. He, as Father, wanted children. From eternity past His great of heart of love had yearned and longed for someone like Himself to whom He could

reveal Himself and with whom He could share all that He is. In the fullness of time, He made someone in His image, in His likeness. Understanding what that child of His would need, God purposed to provide everything that was necessary for His children to be all that He wanted them to be. That's what we're told, that the Author of blessings is God the Father before the world was made who knew everything that you were going to need. He purposed to provide everything that would be necessary for you to be all that He wants you to be. That gives some scope to the blessings that we're talking about, these hidden things of God. They were in the mind of the Father before the world was. Now, in the fullness of time, the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, came into the world to provide everything that the Father had purposed.

Notice now, in the sixth verse, "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace wherein He hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and on earth. Even in Him whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the council of His own will that we should be to the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:6-12).

Let me bring that to you in fewer words. God the Father purposed to provide everything we needed to be all that He wanted us to be. God the Son, by His poured out life, provided for us all that the Father had purposed, no more, no less. Everything that the Lord Jesus accomplished by His death on the cross had been purposed by the Father. Why? So that He might have a people that would be to the praise of the glory of His grace. That's why he said in Romans, the eighth chapter, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose for whom He did foreknow, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:28-29).

God, the Son, provided by His poured out life, His shed blood, everything that the Father purposed. They're all paid for, provided. He made them available by His poured out life, but we don't stop there. Because in the 13th verse, "In whom He also trusted, after that you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation in whom also after that, you believed. You were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:13-14). Look at it in perspective. God the Father purposed our salvation, God the Son provided our salvation, and God the Spirit is now working to accomplish in us and perfect in us all that the Father purposed and all that the Son provided. Why? That we should be to the praise of the glory of the Father who purposed our salvation, that we should be to the praise of the glory of the Son who provided our salvation, that we should be to the praise of the glory of the Holy Spirit who is going to accomplish in us what the Father purposed and what the Son provided. That's what you have.

He is telling this church in Ephesus and us as well that our spiritual blessings are in the heavenlies. Those spiritual blessings that came out of the heart of the Father, provided by the blood of the Son, and will be accomplished in us by the work of the Holy Ghost. I think that's quite wonderful. For me, that makes ... I begin to think maybe that's worth an amen or hallelujah or something that's long out of style in most places, because it excites me to think that God the Father knew everything I was going to need, and God the Son paid for and provided everything I was going to need, and God the Holy Spirit wants to make effective in me all that the Father purposed and all that the Son provided. I think those are hidden blessings. You don't find them on the bulletin board. You don't find those in the weekly bulletin. No, that's hidden. That's in the heart of God.

How hidden is it? Verses 15 to 20 in the first chapter gives to us the revelation of God's blessing. They're in the heavenlies, they're from the heart of the Father by the blood of the Son through the power of the Spirit, but how do we find out about it? What I've told you is fine. I'm sure you'll say, "Great but big deal. Unless I know what they are, what good is it going to do me?" Well, I agree with that. I think your thinking is on line and correct. Notice what he said to the people at Ephesus. Now, remember, the people at Ephesus weren't Jews with a history of Judaism. They weren't skilled in the Old Testament. They had been worshiping at the shrine of Diana of the Ephesians. Their education was very limited. He's not talking to a theologically trained people.

I remember speaking on Ephesians one time. Someone said, "Well, that's very deep." I said, "Yes, but the Ephesians were much smarter than the believers are today." They didn't think it was deep. They just thought it was true. They received that it's true. This is not deep, this is true. This is truth. But remember what he said. Let's go back again. Let's go back again to 1 Corinthians chapter two. We've got to keep things straight here. "For we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit, which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Again, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for their foolishness to him." To whom is this revelation going to come? Listen to Paul as he continues writing his letter to the Ephesians. "Wherefore, when I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love unto all the saints, I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of glory will give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him that the eyes of your understanding may be open that you may know" (Eph. 1:15-18).

Well, these people knew a lot. Don't underestimate them. They knew that Jesus Christ was God come in the flesh. They knew that they were sinners. They had been convicted of their crimes before God. They knew that they'd repented. They knew that had savingly received Christ. They knew they were born again. They knew they were filled with the spirit. They knew they were new creations in Christ. That was an awful lot they knew, but Paul is saying to them, "Listen dear, dear Ephesians brothers in Christ. I'm praying for you that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of glory will give unto you the Holy Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ that the eyes of your understanding may be open that you may know what you don't know yet." Do you understand? They knew a lot, but there was a lot still hidden that they hadn't seen yet. It was those hidden blessings that Paul was so anxious for them to have revealed unto them.

It is that we find here that today, now, we're so content with what we know that we lose all interest in what we don't know. A teenage girl came to an acquaintance of mine. She said, "You don't know what you don't know." He thought that was profound for a teenager. I guess none of us would be able to answer that, "You don't know what you don't know." This is true of a great many believers. They don't know what they don't know. It's what they don't know that they need to know that we're talking about. How easy it is for us to become content with a part instead of claiming the whole.

I remember years ago during the Second World War that a story came out about a man from Montana that decided he was gonna quit farming. He had already sold his farm. He was gonna go to Spokane and help President Roosevelt. He was gonna get a job at a factory, and he was gonna help President Roosevelt win this war. So, somebody showed him where to go. He got a badge, and he went to work. He was there about 9 or 10 months and a letter came to the White House. "Dear Mr. Roosevelt, I sold my farm in Montana and I moved to Spokane and when this war broke out, I decided I 'as going go to work as best I could and to help you win it. I've been working there now for 10 months. I have used up all my savings. It's expensive to live here in Spokane. I just am gonna have to tell you that I'm sorry, but I have to go back to Montana. I've got a little piece of ground. I can grow some food there because I can't stay here anymore."

It caught someone's attention in the White House. They had someone go investigate him. He had truly done as he said. But you see, in all of his life, he'd never had to use a check. Someone said, "Well, haven't you been getting money from your company?" "No, haven't had a dime," "Well, haven't they been giving you ..." "Yeah, about every couple of weeks, I get one of those thank you notes from the president for helping him in his war. I just got them all at home in a book. I thought my kids would be interested to see them sometime, and I'm gonna take them back to me." Here were checks that he'd been getting every two weeks since he started to work for thousands of dollars. You see, the eyes of his understanding had never been opened to understand the use, value and function of a check. He was hungry because he didn't care enough to ask somebody what are these for. He assumed that because he thought they were thank you notes, that's all they were. He was impoverished by his voluntary ignorance. That's what Paul is saying to the church in Ephesus, "You've got much, you've been awakened, you've been convicted, you've brought to life in Christ, you've given evidence of the genuineness of the work of God in your heart, you've been filled with the Spirit, but you have thought that's all there was."

A little boy was put to bed at night. An hour or so he had been put to bed, Mother heard a thump on the floor. She went up, and he was crying. He had fallen out of bed. She said, "What's the matter?" He said, "Mommy, I went to sleep too close to where I got in and when I rolled over, I fell out." There's a lot of God's dear children that go to sleep so close to where they get

in that they simply do not ever understand “the blessings that God has prepared for them that love Him.” Paul very patiently writes to this church at Ephesus. He’s saying, “Listen, I’m praying for you that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of glory will give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him” (Eph. 1:16-17).

Now, these are smart people. I just believe they were. I believe they were so smart that when they found out how Paul was praying for them, they started to pray for themselves the same way. At least if they didn’t, they weren’t as smart as I give them credit from being because if I can find out how God is praying for me, I just know how I’d better pray for myself. When I find out how the Lord Jesus in His unchangeable priesthood is interceding for me, I know how I’d better pray for myself. I just believe that from the time they got this letter, those bear believers up in Ephesus were saying, “Heavenly Father, open the eyes of our understanding that we may know the things that Thou is preparing for them that love Thee.”

They started to pray the way Paul was praying for them, because, you see, there are some things God does. God sent someone to live Christ before you and He didn’t ask you about that. God sent someone to intercede for you and He didn’t ask you about that. You didn’t have to pray for that. God sent someone to witness to you and you didn’t have to ask for that. God awakened you and you didn’t ask for that. He convicted you and you didn’t ask for that. He brought you to repentance and quickened repentance in your heart. You may have had to ask for that. Some people do. They’ve recognized that they didn’t have repentant hearts. They read where it says, “He’s been exalted to give repentance and remission of sins to heal Israel” (Act. 5:31). They said, “Oh, God. My heart’s so obdurate and hard. Give me a repentant heart,” and He heard. Then, they asked Him to forgive them and pardon them as they savingly embrace Christ.

There were some things God did without our asking, but there are some things He’ll do only when we do ask. This is one of them. He is not going to force you He’s not going to force you to be quiet and to be still and to ask Him to reveal to you “those things He’s prepared for them that love Him.” He’s going to exhort you. He’s going to intrigue you. He’s going to encourage you, but He won’t make you, not going to force you to do it. There are some things that God only does because we ask Him to do it. Now, the hidden things of God, the spiritual blessings that are in the heavenlies that the Father purposed, and the Son provided, and the Holy Spirit is waiting to make real in our lives are not shown to us until we ask God to show them. It’s just that simple. You must ask God to open the eyes of your understanding and to teach you and to show you these hidden blessings that are yours because of your being adopted into the family of God and placed as a child under Him as your Father. You have to ask Him. He’s not going to make you.

There have been times ... My wife and I have raised six children, or we think we have. Then, there are times we’re not sure we have yet. I read somewhere that being a parent never ceases. You’re always a parent. My son says, “Yeah, but you’re always a child too. Don’t forget that, Dad.” The fact is we’ve raised, we thought we have, six children. We have, at times, had something very important we wanted to say to them and share with them. I have learned with my children that if they want to talk more badly than I want to talk, and I force them to listen, they don’t hear. Through the years, we developed a ... I don’t know. If I had something, however important it was, and they were busting to get out what they had, I’d let them go ahead and talk it out. Maybe the time ran out, and I never told them or not for a while. I just knew that if I were to hush them down and say, “Now, you listen to me,” I was just wasting time because they were so full of what they wanted to say that there wasn’t any way in the world they could hear what I wanted them to hear. Our heavenly Father is just like that. We’re so often so full of our own program and our own plans and our own interest and our own activities and all the things we’ve got on our plate, we haven’t time to say, “Oh God, I’m gonna be still before You. I’m gonna be quiet before You. I’m just gonna wait on You. Open the eyes of my understanding that I may know that which You have prepared for them that love You. I am so happy with that I have, but Lord I’m gonna be so embarrassed if I see You and discovered that You had much more for me than I’ve experienced, and I was too preoccupied and busy to even ask You what they were.” No, you’re gonna have to ask Him.

What is it that He wants us to see? There are three things that are given there quickly. First, *He wants us to know the hope of His calling.* Secondly, *He wants us to know the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.* Thirdly, *He wants us to know the greatness of His power toward us who believe.* Hope of His calling. Every book I read on Ephesians dealing with that verse tells me that He’s talking about the hope to which we’re called, but it didn’t say the hope of our calling. It said the hope of His calling. You see, the Lord Jesus had a call, did He not? The call in the heart from eternity past. As Father, God wanted children.

As brother, elder brother, He wanted brethren. His bridegroom, He wanted a bride. There was this yearning, longing in the heart of God for someone like Himself whom He could love and with Whom He could share all that He had. "In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4). Can you see the Lord Jesus as it were take off the diadem of His glory and set it by and the robes of His majesty and lay them down, the scepter of His power and say, "Father, I'm ready to answer the call." The next minute, the eternal Son is joined to one cell in the body of Mary. Nine months later, He is born Emmanuel, God come in the flesh. Very God of very God, very man of very man. In Him, got the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He answered the call to come into the world that He might redeem men.

What was the hope He had, the expectation that He had, the reasonable grounds of expectation that He had? If He answered that call, it was to lead Him to the cross into the tomb. If He had reasonable grounds to believe that some would be redeemed, He said, "All the Father's given Me shall come unto Me" (Joh. 6:37). He knew there would be those who would be redeemed. But He also had expectation that everyone that would be redeemed by His blood would recognize that He had an interest in them. If you couldn't buy your salvation by your own works, how in the living world do you think you could satisfactorily serve God by your own works? Forgiveness deals with the past, deals with the sins that have been committed. When you're pardoned, it's of transgressions committed. Now, you're forgiven. The very energy, the very stuff, the very personality that wasn't able to earn salvation, do you think now you can turn around and use that same human energy and strength to serve God acceptably? No. Paul thought so when he was converted. He was a great speaker and orator. When he got to Damascus and his sight restored, he decided what he needed to do was to take these long briefs he had condemning the Christians and turn them around and read them from the bottom up and preach Christ. The same energy with which he pursued the Christians, he now wanted to serve the Lord. Well, God had a time, didn't he? They turned on Paul, the believers turned on him, unbelievers, everyone turned on him. Did you see him? I was in the house there where he had stayed. Strangely enough in one of the closets was a little manhole that went to a tunnel that went to the main tunnel under the street called Straight. He was in one of the few houses in Damascus, still there, it was when I was there, that had that tunnel that went to the main tunnel under the street.

Paul is ... There's no train service, there's no plane service, and the buses don't run on the weekend, but you better go. You're in trouble. I see Paul as he slides down that manhole and he starts crawling down there on his hands and knees. He gets to the bigger tunnel under the main street called Straight. It came up in a manhole in the tower at the gate. Paul comes up into the gatehouse. Then, he goes on up into the tower because there was no door right there. He says, "Listen, boys. I gotta leave town. They're after me." Somebody saw a wash basket for clothes and some rope. They said, "Well, you get in here. We'll let you down." Here's Paul being let down hand by hand outside the gate of Damascus. When he gets up, he says, "Now, which way Lord? You know, I'm from Tarsus and I got a lot of friends there. Remember some of the best clubs in Tarsus." "Sorry, that's not the way." "Well, I could go south back to Jerusalem." "No." "I could go north." "No." "Lord, that only leaves one way, doesn't it?" He said, "That's right, east." "All that's out there is sand." "Yeah, there's a few people out there." "Where do you get food?" "That's gonna be a problem, Paul. I guess you're gonna have to work for it." So we see Paul trudging out east into the sand dunes.

He comes to a Bedouin family there with their camels and black camel haired tents. He goes up to the man there standing with sword drawn. He says, "I'm just a poor, wandering Pharisee. I've been ..." "What do you want, man?" "I want a job. I gotta eat." "What do you know?" "I'm an awful good lawyer and I can talk well." "My wife does all that in this house. Sorry, there's no opening. What else can you do?" "Well, I had an apprenticeship in making tents." "Oh good, you go over and join the slave girls there and start making tents." They would braid the camel hair into about 10 inch wide strips. Then, they would sew them together. Three years later, he's lost his membership in the American Express Club. He's lost all of his credit cards. Everything's gone. The Lord speaks to him and says, "Paul, are you about ready?" "Well, Lord." "What was your strength when you came here, Paul?" "I told him I was a pretty good speaker?" "What about now?" He said, "No. I don't think I'm a very good speaker, but I got a good callous on my thumb from pushing that needle through the camel hair. I'm a good tent maker." "Well, just remember that, you'll have to use it again a little later." He said, "I guess you're ready." He had to spend three years in unlearning to come to the end of himself before he was ready to serve the Lord, so that when he would write to the church in

Corinth, he would say, "I was with you in fear and much trembling and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). Paul had been stripped.

You discover, don't you, the meaning of this. You discover this, that you can't serve God in the energy and the strength with which you served yourself, but you served the devil. He won't use it. Everything done by the flesh is going to perish in the flames. That's why Paul 35 years after he wrote to the church in Rome, he said, "I'm knowing this that our old man is crucified with Christ" (Rom. 6:6). He writes to the church at Galatia and he says, "I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). You see, that's the hope of His calling, that everyone redeemed by His blood would recognize they couldn't serve God in the energy of their own personality and "would count it their reasonable service to present their bodies a living sacrifice and invite the Lord Jesus Christ to live in them" (Rom. 12:1). That's the hope of His calling.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints is that He's going to use us to the end of bringing men out of death into life. The greatness of His power to us who believe. He wants us to know that the power that's going to enable us to serve Him is not dedicated personality. I hear and read and see so much about unleash the great powers within you. Well, I don't know really a great deal about what they're talking, but I'll tell you this, the power that was in the Apostle Paul was not more of Paul. It was Christ living in him. The only kind of power I'm interested in is that same power that the Lord Jesus Christ when He left heaven's glory His destination was my heart to live in me His light. That's a hidden light. That's a hidden blessings. You don't see that. You looked and you saw Paul, but hidden inside of Paul was the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Php. 4:13).

I've told, many of you have heard perhaps some of the tapes, you've heard me refer to the daughter of William Booth<sup>1</sup>, the founder of the Salvation Army, who when she was old enough asked her father if she could serve the Lord with her sister and brother in law, the Wilberforces, in Paris. She was given the opportunity of becoming the evangelist in the women's prisons in France. There was one prison in France in Paris to which the worst women criminals were sent. That was the one she visited most frequently. She'd been there many times until, then, she discovered that there was one cell bunk that she had not been privileged to see. Learning about it, she insisted that they let her go. They said, "We can't do that. These are the worst women prisoners in all of France. A woman as refined and cultured as you are has no business being down among this vicious people." "I'm going." She had the letters and the authority to go, so she went. She saw that down the end of this corridor to her right at the last cell was a board wall between the last cell and the next one in. She said, "What's that wall of board for?" They said, "The one on the other side is such a horrible specimen and hardly human that the other women can't stand to look at her. We agreed and we put the wall up so they wouldn't have to see her face." Well, Miss. Booth stood there and she began to preach, preach the love of Christ and the grace of God and the marvel of His poured out light availing to wash away sin and to bring pardon and forgiveness. In the midst of what she was saying about our wonderful Lord, from behind that board, a fear screeching, screaming, swearing, cursing the vilest of words flowed like a torrent. Finally, the woman was exhausted, but the sum of what she said was this, "You're a liar. There isn't any God. If there was a God, He wouldn't be like you say He is. Nobody loves me. Everyone hates me. Look at these boards. They don't even want to look at me." Without moving from where she was, Miss. Booth said, "There is a God. I know Him. He sent me here to tell you that He loves you and that He wants to meet you and save you and make you a new person." Again, another torrent of cursing. Finally, the woman said, "Listen, you say you love me and that God loves me. I can remember one person who loved me, my mother. She died just before I was five years old, but I can remember her lips coming down and kissing my forehead and my eyelids. I can hear her voice as she said, 'Darling, I love you.' You say God loves me, I'll tell you what. You come and you kiss me the way my mother kissed me and I'll believe you." The matron said, "You can't do that, Miss. Booth. There's that board. You can't do that." "Oh yes, I can. That's why I'm here." So, this woman, godly, gracious, clean, refined woman slowly walked down the corridor. When she got there, there was that leery face warped and twisted and marred with viciousness pressed against the bars and saying, "You think you can kiss this?" Without hesitation, Miss. Booth walked over, she put her hands through the bars, she took the woman's back of her head in her hands, she laid her lips on her forehead and on her eyelids, and she said, "I love you and God loves you." The

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine Booth-Clibborn (1858-1955) An English Salvationist and Evangelist. Known as "La Maréchale".

warm tears dripped down her eyes and onto the woman's face. In a moment, that woman's head slipped out of her hands as the woman's knees fell in the straw on the floor. She said, "It's true. It's true. There is a God, and He loves me because only God could cause you to kiss me the way my mother did." Listen, Miss. Booth is just as refined and cultured and sensitive to uncleanness and viciousness as any of you, but you see, the One in her or the Lord Jesus Christ was able to love that woman through her. That's what the hidden mystery is.

I will live in the heavens. I will dwell in them. I will walk in them. That's why He wants us to know the greatness of His power to us who believe. This isn't measured in buildings, in basilicas, in vast organs and colored glass windows. This wisdom is from above. It's hidden. It's in the heart. It's when the Lord Christ digs up His abode in the light, the hidden things of God, the place of blessings in the heavenlies, the Author of blessing, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the revelation of blessing by the Holy Ghost to the end that Christ should be free to live His life in us.

Heavenly Father, it is so easy for us to have our soul satisfied and think the needs of our spirits have been met. Teach us to distinguish between the soul and the spirit, not to denigrate the soul. You gave it to us and the ability to enjoy all that You've made. Father, help us to recognize that we are not just body, soul, and spirit. We have spirits as well and that spiritual blessings are given to us by God the Holy Spirit to our spirit. For the part of the man that knows the things of man is the spirit of man that is in him. Father, we would ask that tonight as we rejoice in all that Thou has done for us, marvel at the reach of Thy grace to us that we're going to satisfy Thy heart by asking Thee to open the eyes of our understanding, to enable us to see in a new, fresh way that which Thou "hast prepared for them that love Thee." Breathe upon us breath of God. We're no better than our hunger. Oh, spare us from ever not living our hunger for Thee. Stir our hearts tonight for the deep desire to be all that You would have us be and to experience all that You've provided in Your love that our lives would bring the greatest possible glory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

\* Reference such as: Delivered at Camp Perkins, Stanley, Idaho on Tuesday, July 26, 1988 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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