

The Hidden Things of God – Part 3

By Paris Reidhead*

I want you to remember, you that have been with us in services past, that we're talking about God's hidden things, God's hidden blessings. It's interesting that the attention of the world seems to be fastened on what they can see and in our attempt to recruit the world and get it involved with us, we are almost invariably forced to entertain, to bring the kind of program that is going to be attractive, all of which would indicate that the spiritual life of the Church is very deficient. The hidden Church, the Church that is not seen. The church buildings, as you know, don't constitute the Church. The church organization does not constitute the Church. The hierarchy does not comprise the Church. It means ecclesia, a gathered group, a body that have been drawn by the spirit of God out from the world and to the Lord Jesus Christ and they are often not the company that you see in the congregation on Sunday morning.

Now, why would I say that? Because, what you see in the congregation on Sunday morning is not what you see in the service on Sunday night. Have you ever noticed that? There are far fewer that come on Sunday night than do on Sunday morning. And what you see on Sunday night is considerably larger than the company you see on Wednesday or Thursday night whenever the Church meets to pray. And I am wondering therefore if it isn't wise for us to reexamine what is indeed the congregation of the Lord.

Years ago when I was a student at Bible school in Minneapolis, Northwestern Bible School, first year, fall of 1935, I was assigned by my English teacher, our English teacher, to write a theme, write a paper, on some subject that was current and germane to the life of the Church. And so I thought about it a good bit. I had noticed that just across from the front doors of the great First Baptist Church in Minneapolis, was the headquarters of the Communist Party in the state of Minnesota. Now, you may not have known it, but Minnesota was the one state in the Union that came within just a few votes of electing a communist governor back in the Depression years and the Communist party was very, very strong in Minnesota. Well, I finally screwed up enough courage to open the door. I kind of thought that if I stepped inside, I'd be on a trap door and I'd slide right through to Siberia. I was so intimidated by going into the building that was dedicated to Communism in Minneapolis. And I went to the desk, there was a woman there that was doing some stenography and was also receptionist, and I told her I was from the Bible school across the street and I wanted to talk with someone there who could explain to me Communist educational methods in the state of Minnesota. And she said, "Oh, I guess you'll have to talk to Big Bill. He's a God-hater, but he's awful smart." And so she got on the intercom and she called him down, "Bill!" She yelled up the stairwell and after a moment, this man came down. He stood about 11 feet 6 ax handles high, or so it seemed to me. He just seemed to fill that stairwell and the closer he got to the bottom step, the smaller I felt. And here he is intimidating me by his presence, six foot six or seven, I judge, and big as could be a lever's beam across the shoulders. And he's standing there, "What do you want?" And I'm at that time a 16 year old Bible school student. I got in a year or two younger because my folks couldn't afford to send me to the last year of high school and Dr. Riley took pity on me. I'd been his bird dog and scared up pheasants on our farm when he came hunting, so he said, "Yes, you can come." So, here I was 16 years old asking Big Bill about the Communist educational methods in the state of Minnesota. And I told him who I was and what I was doing and he pointed to my briefcase, you wouldn't have called it brief, it was bulged so far with so many books and papers and notebooks that the snap wouldn't snap on the side so I had a couple of straps on it to try to hold it together and I had to carry it under my arm. It was all I had. And so it's sitting on the floor, he said, "Is that yours?" And I had to admit that it was. He said, "Do you have a Bible in it?" And I said, "Yes, I have a Bible in it." He said, "Then why," and he started to swear different assorted reasons, "did you come over here and bother me if you've got a Bible in that bag?" Well, I said, "What does that have to do with the Communist educational methods in the state of Minnesota?" He said, "Don't you realize that when we found out that a small group of people without political influence, without financial power, without any organization, were able to conquer the world in 150 years, that we would study how they did it?" And I said, "I never thought of that." He said, "Of course not. None of you Christians think, much less think of something as important as that." Well, I said, "Explain, what do you mean? What do you mean?" He said, "Let me tell you what happened. I came here, they brought me from another state to take over this training work here and I noticed that on Sunday morning hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people pour into that auditorium across the street. And I

watched it a few months and one Sunday morning I got up courage enough to go over and sit down. I had to go in the balcony, it was all full in the lower level, and I got up there and the balcony was full. That man got up there with all that dignity and power and he started to speak and before he finished, I said, 'We don't have a ghost of a chance. They're too powerful for us.' But he made one statement. He said, 'I want all of you to come back tonight. A very important service, the message is so-and-so.' So, I said, 'Well, I'm going to see.' So at night when the doors opened, I was there. The service started, they roped off the back pews, and everyone there that night was sitting down in the front half of the auditorium." And He said, "I looked at it and said that must be the main cadre of committed people. I understand that. That's formidable. We can't beat that. But he then gave a few clues. The Pastor said, 'Now, I want all of you to come on Wednesday evening to the Hour of Power, our prayer service.' Well, Wednesday night I was going to be there. And I went to the front door and it was locked tight so I kept walking around the church until I could find a door that was open and finally I found one in that building down at the end there on 12th Street and I went in and I saw a janitor there and I said, 'Where's the big meeting?' He says, 'There's no big meeting tonight.' 'Well, I was here Sunday night and he said he wanted all those people to come.' 'Oh, well that's down in room 118.' That was a classroom and he said, I went in there and when the man that had talked to 2500 people on Sunday morning came in, I counted them, there were 56 people there." He said, "I want to tell you something. Christianity in America is dead!" Then he said, "We're going to take what you throw away and we're going to wipe you off the face of the earth." I said, "I don't understand." He said, "I see you don't." He said, "Communism, the leaders in Communism went to the Bible and took the very principles of the Bible that are there that you people throw away and we use those principles and we're going to take what you throw away to wipe you off the face of the earth." I said, "I still don't understand." He said, "Let me ask you, doesn't your Bible say, 'Obey them that have the rule over you'?" I said, "Yes, it does." "Was that man that stood there on Sunday morning the respected and the authorized spokesman to those 2500 people?" I said he was. "Why didn't they come? He told them to come. They didn't come. There's no respect for authority. They have no respect for their faith." He said, "I am a Communist. We have a hierarchy. I know my place. I am obedient to those above me and there are those below me that I direct. If I say to a man, 'Go out into the street and stand there in front of that truck.' He doesn't say, 'Well I might die.' He goes out there and stands in front of the truck, because the one principle we have inculcated into everyone that is associated with Communism is, you obey them that has the rule over you." He said, "That's just one principle. We throw away the theology of the Scripture and we take the practical principles of the Scripture and we're going to use them to destroy you."

Well, that was back in 1935. They haven't succeeded yet in destroying us and I don't think they will. I think Communism is on the wane. I have no fear of political Communism destroying America or destroying the Church. I have far greater fear of that which is called the Church destroying the people of God. That little segment of people that are hidden, that are hidden, the hidden people. Now to see this, you're going to have to go to Revelation the twelfth chapter. And we'll come back to Ephesians, we're not abandoning it. I simply want you to understand of whom and what we speak. Revelation chapter 12 and I begin with verse one. "And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven. A woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of 12 stars."

What is this? This woman that in chapter 17 is the harlot? Here she's the beautiful woman, the beautiful ... What is it? It's organized religion. It's the Church of the centuries past and notice in the second verse, this strange statement, "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth and pain to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in Heaven. And behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads and his tail grew the third part of the stars of Heaven and it cast them to the earth and the dragon stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered for to devour her child as soon as it was born and she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron that her child was caught up unto God and to His throne" (Rev. 12:1-5).

Here you have a situation where in the woman, in the organized religious system of history, there has always been a small company of people who were the man-child, who were born of God, who were partakers of the divine nature. God ordained that the man-child should be protected and for many centuries it has, but notice there was a red dragon that stood outside the woman. There'd been a league made between the red dragon and the woman. That woman would be able to protect the man-child. She wanted to be delivered of it. She didn't want it in her. She couldn't wait to get rid of it, but God had sovereignly ordained that she should protect it until a time. And that there would come a time when the woman would deliver the man-

child and that the man-child then would be caught up and taken away because it had a purpose with God, a purpose to serve God. And so the consequence is, here we have a hidden people, a hidden people that are encompassed by the organized religious system of the day and of the time.

In Catholicism, there have been and there are a company of people who are born of God. I've met some of them, I've talked with them, I know that they truly, wonderfully, love Christ. That's true through the ages. Many of the hymns in your book have come from Catholic saints that sought God and loved God with all their hearts. When you sing "Jesus, Jesus, the very thought of Thee with sweetness fills my breast, but sweeter far Thy face to see and in Thy presence rest."¹ You're singing with Bernard of Clairvoux back in the 12th century. And through the ages, some of our great poetry and hymnity has come from Catholic saints. But it's been still the woman that sits upon the throne in Revelation 17. But hidden in her have been those that have been born of God that are His. And so it has been also with the denominations. Many years ago that group founded by John Wesley² known as Methodists who subsequently in the century that followed, repudiated Wesley and the message he had preached. Still if you'll go throughout the land, you will find in Methodism that there is a company of people, in most every Church there are some, who are truly born of God and love God with all their heart. And you will find this throughout all of Christendom today. Dr. Tozer³ at the Tabernacle in New York when I was pastor there, said on not one occasion only, but on several occasions, he was convinced that based on his 40 years of ministry that probably no more than one out of ten of the members of Evangelical Churches, and he proceeded to say, including the society of which I am a part, have ever been born of God. And of course that would cause some to go, "Hah!" Then he would stop and say, "Now, if I've made an error, I probably put it too high. If the facts were truly known, it might be considerably less than one out of ten." Archie Lee in the Spartanburg First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1950 at the South Carolina Southern Baptist Convention said in his experience based on 40 years observation, probably no more than one out of ten of the Southern Baptists know anything experientially about the new birth. And again the preachers gasped. But the fact was that he said that if I'm in error, I put it too high. It's probably far less than one out of ten.

What is it? What am I talking about? I'm talking the man-child. I'm talking about that company of people that have been made "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). We have been told by God that we are not, we are not to take away the wheat from the chaff lest there should be destruction of wheat. Taking the chaff away or the tares away from the wheat, lest there should be destruction of the wheat. We've been told we can't do that. And every attempt to do it has ended up with another generation of problems. I suggested two nights ago that there may be another answer to that that'll come because the tares will decide that they don't want the wheat any longer, and the woman will decide that she doesn't want the man-child any longer, and that there will be persecution that will break out in our day and time possibly, and I trust not, but there is a possibility of it, where the pressure will be to get those that are born of God, that are always opposing the program, always are dissatisfied with what's happening, the troublemakers, because they're always talking about something spiritual, "Well, we want to go ahead with what we've got." It's going to come that the tares are going to say, "Hey, we've had enough of you. You're only 10%. Out with you. Out with you. Away"

Can it happen? Yes, it can happen. It happened to me back in 1953. I was a member of a large church in a Southern city and I had made the mistake of reflecting on the evangelism of that Church. I hadn't done it deliberately, but it was taken as though I had. When I had said that in Africa, we did not baptize people the day that they said they were born again. We didn't do it for a very explicit reason. And I said, right there in that church, which did baptize people the day that they professed to be born again, and I made this statement, "Because we don't want the Church in Africa to become like the Church is in America." And the associate pastor rushed to me afterwards and, "Paris, you never should have said that, he'll never forgive you!" I said, "What? I was talking about Africa." He didn't hear Africa, he heard fear. Two years later, two years later they found out that God had met the hunger of my heart and I'd had an experience with the Holy Spirit and they said, the pastor said to the head of their mission, "If you don't dismiss Reidhead today, we're going to stop supporting the mission." I'd previously gone to the head of the mission, given my testimony, and he, with tears in his eyes, said, "Praise God. I'm hoping everyone in our society

1 "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee" By Bernard of Clairvoux, 12th century.

2 John Wesley (1703-1791) Anglican cleric, Christian theologian, and founding the Methodist movement

3 Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author. Christian and Missionary Alliance

will be met the same way God's met you." And I said, "That's what you say now, but when the pressure gets on as it might, remember this, you have my resignation if you want it." And he called me on the telephone where I was in meetings and he said, "I've got to have your resignation now because if you don't I'm going to have to dismiss you." I said, "I will resign, but I will do it at my time with my testimony⁴ and I will not accept dismissal. I came in through the board, I will go out through the board." And I wrote a 40 page testimony of what I believed and how I came to believe it. That pastor, my pastor, had absolutely no concern about me, my ministry, about my wife, about our children, about our livelihood. We were cut off that day.

And when finally I went to the board with my testimony and resigned, they accepted my resignation and then two months later in another meeting rescinded the acceptance and dismissed me for heresy. When I found that out, I was pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church of the Christian Missionary Alliance on 8th Avenue and 44th Street and Dr. Clyde Taylor, the head of the National Association of Evangelicals went to the mission and he said, "You've just committed one of the most insane acts that any Evangelical agency has ever done. You've branded the pastor of the founding Church as being a hieratic." And they said, "Well, we're not going to change it." That they want to do it that way and it stands that way till now. That director that had accepted my testimony with tears told me, "I'm going to close every door to you. When you go back home, you better go to the Encyclopedia Britannica and get licensed as a salesman because you're never going to have another Church that'll listen to you. I'll close every door." Well, God had told me the day before and then the day that he called, "The door shall close behind you and open before you." And so I said, "Well, doctor, I'm extremely interested in this. You go ahead and do everything you planned or think you're going to do because it's going to be very exciting to me. First, if you're successful in closing every door, it proves that you have far more power than any one little man who puts his socks on one at a time in the morning ought to have. And secondly, if you are successful, it's going to prove that the God of Heaven and Earth doesn't have nearly as much power as he ought to have if He's going to stay God. So, you just do whatever it is that's in your mind to do and I'll pray for you. But I'm going to go right on just doing what God wants me to do."

The point I'm making was that there was an attitude toward anyone who would cross that line. Anyone regardless of who they were, what they were. You can call it persecution if you want to. It was mild, it didn't hurt me, I never suffered from it. If you go back to that city, you'll find, mention my name, they'll get out their clubs and go out to the hole where they beat me into the ground and they'll start to pound again. They pounded me into the ground, God made a way under the ground, I came up, I've been ministering ever since and rejoicing and praising the Lord, but the fact still remains that there is a great hatred on the part of those who are in anyway crossing, crossing the line, the party line.

I was at a table last summer, my wife was with me, I had been preaching at America's Keswick in Toms River, New Jersey. I'd been there the second year. I'd been preaching what I preach here and what I preach everywhere, just the Word as I see it and as I believe it's been seen by the Church for centuries. A conversation started at the table, it was the last day. I was excluded from the conversation because it was directed to the other members around the table. I had been invited to the table specially. And they said to one man, "What do you think of John MacArthur's book 'The Gospel of Jesus'?" And the other man said, "I consider that this matter of Lordship salvation is heresy." I had been preaching Lordship salvation all week. It wasn't addressed to me, it was addressed to me indirectly. I wasn't asked to comment. I wasn't asked for anything. What happened was, I was told by that conversation, "You'll never be invited back to Keswick again."

You see, John MacArthur had broken the party line. He'd stepped over the traces and he had begun to articulate the message that has resulted in producing that hidden body, that man-child. And the amity against that message is so fantastic. The book that Pastor Evans brought to your attention, "Getting Evangelicals Saved"⁵, is probably I trust it's going to be as successfully controversial as "The Gospel According to Jesus" by John MacArthur has been. I hope so. I'm trusting so, praying so. Nothing would please me more because it has to be raised.

⁴ "That I May Know Him – A Testimony" www.parisreidheadbibleteachingministries.org/pdf/may_know_him.pdf 1953.

⁵ "Getting Evangelicals Saved" Now called, "Finding the Reality of God" By Paris Reidhead, 1988.

Now, what have I said? We saw last night that there's a hidden blessing. "Bless us with all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). The Father purposed our salvation. The Son provided it. The Holy Spirit will work it in us and make it real. And we saw also that we have to ask God to open the eyes of our understanding so we may know these hidden blessings. They aren't seen in the eye. "The natural man receiveth not the things that be of God" (I Cor. 2:14). The 90% or whatever percentage it is that have not been born of God in the Church, do not know what you're talking about when you talk about that just because "natural man receiveth not the things that be of God."

"Eye have not seen or heard, neither has it entered into the minds of men that which God has prepared for them that love him, but they are revealed by his Spirit" (I Cor. 2:9-10). And if they are not born by the Spirit, the Spirit of God is not going to reveal them and they think you're talking nonsense. And to them it is nonsense. So, what we're finding then is that the body of believers that are born of God, that man-child, are not comprehended by the rest of the membership, whatever group they are a part of. They don't understand them. They don't comprehend them. And I've had them tell me, "Listen, I don't know what you're talking about." And I've had to say, "Yes, I think you're absolutely right. You don't know what I'm talking about." Not because it's so difficult to understand, but because it's revealed by the Holy Ghost. I haven't seen or heard, it isn't a function of the intellect, it's a revelation by the Holy Spirit.

Now, if we are to have as we have found Ephesians the fourth chapter, the building up of the body of Christ given there and I want you to turn to it now in Ephesians chapter four where we are told that verse 11, "He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry unto the building up of the body of Christ till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a mature, a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). Now if that is the function of the ministry, the five-fold ministry, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, is the maturing of the saints, then you can understand that the only ones who can be matured are the ones that have been born of God and the ones that have made a profession of faith, products of an easy believism or by any other means brought in to the membership of a Christian church, so called, they're not going to be able to be mature.

Let me put it this way. We had a big evangelistic crusade in New York some years ago when I was pastor there and the word was out, the results of this are going to depend upon the follow up. Well, I was responsible for an area around the church and some of the people that had designated us to follow them up. I went through some 700 cards that were given to me and I did not find one person that gave evidence of being born of God. Now, let me ask you, how much follow up do you have to have to make a stillborn baby live? How much warm milk and tender loving care does it take to make a stillborn baby live? If there's life, then there can be follow up, but if there isn't life, then follow up is not going to be effective. So, here we read, "He's given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers who are the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry," to what end? To what end? A monument to personal prowess and ability and leadership and charisma? Is that what it is? No. To the end of bringing individuals to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That's our task.

But if they haven't been born of God, there isn't any way that you can bring them up "into the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ." No way in the world. Therefore the ministry is a hidden ministry. It's a ministry "He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, pastors, teachers, for this purpose of maturing the saints, bringing them up to maturity to full growth." Paul wrote to the Church in Colossae and he said, "I labor and I prevail in pain night and day for you until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). What is he saying? He is saying, "I do not want to preside over a playpen full of spiritual infants that never went beyond the baby stage. I want to be able to present you mature in Christ. That's what I'm praying for. That's what I'm laboring for." Well, listen to this. "That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of man and cunning craftiness whereby they lie and wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head even Christ from whom the whole body quickly joined together and compacted by which every joint supplied according to the effect we're working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body under the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:14-16).

What is he saying? It's a hidden Church. A hidden relationship. It's a hidden light. Is it being joined to each other in a given locality? No. It's been joined to the Lord Jesus Christ. The "Christ be formed in them" because He is doing something. I

mentioned to the brethren because I've been with them since coming to Twin Falls, that we've got to remember, Israel knew the works of the Lord. They knew the miracles that Moses performed to get them delivered. They saw the Red Sea part. They saw the water come out of the rock. They knew the works of the Lord. But Moses knew the way of the Lord and when Moses went up into the mount to meet with God, Aaron, his brother, did not know the way of the Lord and so he took the gold that was to have been used by God for the tabernacle and he fashioned it from his own mind into a calf and said, "Worship the calf of gold." Because Aaron did not know the way of the Lord. And through the centuries the leadership has been taking the gold and fashioning it into the products of their own minds.

And so it's extremely important for us therefore to understand, extremely important for us to understand that what God is telling us now is, I told you that on Thursday night that when God had a chance to do things His way in our lifetime, since 1949, He did it in China. He had to get all the missionaries kicked out, He had to get all the leadership the missionaries had established killed, He had to get all the buildings taken over for recreational centers, and when he got the thing cleaned, then God did something. And since that time we now have in China as I pointed out, at least 25 million people that have been born of God. It's a hidden Church. Even the government can't find it. The devil can't find it. Doesn't know where it is. How to get to it. It's God's miracle. That's what God did when he had a chance, when there wasn't anybody to interfere, when Aaron and Damon and the others weren't there saying, "No, no, no that's not the way. Do it this way. This is the way we do it." Back in Keokuk, Iowa. I don't know why I'm picking on Keokuk, but it just stands for all of the things back here that we pass on over there. At any rate, when God had a chance to do it, what did he do? He hid that Church in China so beautifully that the government's secret service can't find it. But it's there. It's there. And what we're finding here in Ephesians is that everything He has to say to the Church is hidden. It's not going to be understood or comprehended by the world. Not going to be.

Now let us go back and take a few closing moments here and look at the second chapter. I have to begin with the 20th verse of the first chapter and then I'm going to read down through the sixth verse of the second chapter. But I wanted you to do something. I happen to have a King James Version, no I don't happen to, I choose to. I'm too old to change now is all and I don't have to say, "If it was good enough for Paul, it's good enough for me," it's just I prefer it, that's all. Now, having made that little explanation, I'll tell you why. Because the first two words of the second chapter are "And you". I don't know if you have it in the version you're carrying and I don't want to make fuss if you don't, but mine does. Now to begin a chapter with "And you" it seems to be one of the most nonsensical uses of the English language you've ever seen because the function of a conjunction is to conjunct. And what does this conjunct with? "And you who are dead in trespasses and sin," it doesn't make sense (Eph. 2:1). I'll tell you how I made sense out of it. I took my pen and I drew a little oval circle around those two words "And you" and then I took the edge of the pen and went right up the edge of the column to the twentieth verse and I brought it and I tucked it in where it says, "which he wrought in Christ when he raised Him *and you* from the dead and set Him *and you* at His own right hand in the heavenlies" (Eph. 1:20). Ah, it gets a conjunction that really does its work. "And you", he just put it down at the end. Now, you're going to say, "Hey, wait a minute. What right do you have to tuck words in here and there where you want to?" Well, I understand that you have a right to raise the issue. I hope you haven't, but I'm assuming you have. So, I'm going to tell you that down in the fifth verse and the sixth verse, he repeated it, justifying what I've just done.

Look at it here, verse four. "But God who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, have quickened us together" (Eph. 2:4). Isn't that what He said up in verse twenty? "Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him *and you*, same thing, from the dead. Quickened us together and made us sit together and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly," verse twenty (Eph. 2:4-6). You see? That's what He's saying. What is it? The position of God's blessing. The position with which to receive God's blessing was stated back in verse three. "Blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly." Now He's telling us how we take our place in the heavenly. Well, what's He say? "You who are dead in trespasses and sin who walked according to the course of this world according to the principality and power of the air, the same spirit that now works in the children of disobedience among who you all had your manner of life in times past fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature the children of wrath even as others" (Eph. 2:1-3).

Well, now that's my biography. I don't know about yours, but he told it all right there. That's me from top to bottom, a full length portrait. And then it says, "Which he wrought in Christ when He raised Him *and you* from the dead and set Him *and you*

at His own right hand in the heavenly.” Do you see it? Down there it says, “He is rich in mercy with great grace wherewith He loved us even when we dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ and raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlys in Christ.” Now, a believer is not someone who stands at the foot of the cross and believes that the Lord Jesus Christ died for him. A believer is someone who stands at the foot of the cross and knows that he was in Christ and with Christ when he died. And then he goes around to the backside of the cross and he looks up and he sees himself there crucified with Christ that he might have victory over himself, buried with Christ that he might have victory over the world, and quickened with Christ and raised with Christ and seated with Christ that he might have victory over principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age.

All hidden relationships. Hidden. The world can't see it. The world looks at you, it doesn't realize that you're on the back of the cross crucified with Christ, that you're in the tomb buried with Him, and that you've been quickened with Him and raised with Him and seated with Him in the heavenlys and it doesn't see Christ living in you. It just sees a person. “A root out of the dry ground...no beauty that you should desire” (Isa. 53:2). The whole relationship is hidden. It's a hidden love. It's a hidden life. You can't get a diploma in it. Really you can't. There isn't any way you can train to it. You experience it. You experience it. Real, real. You know if the Lord went around with a dagger and punched it through people, there would be no moral value to it, He doesn't do that. He does more or less what He did to me. I told you about it. I went to prayer. I sought God and He met the hunger in my heart and I went to prayer and the Lord said, “The door shall close behind you and open before you,” and I could feel that sword come right up against my heart. “If you don't change, if you don't renounce, if you don't recant, it'll go through you.” After I had resigned they said, “Oh, we're so sorry to lose you. You've been such help to us.” I said, “What would it cost me, what would I have to do to be reinstated?” They said, “You are going to have to first say that your experience is of the devil. That you are a victim of the satanic illusion to occur at the end of the age. And you are going to have to reaffirm your faith in the dispensation and interpretation of Scripture. And you're going to have to do this in as many places as we feel it's necessary.” And I looked at the man telling me and I said, “My dear friend, the price is far too high. I can't pay it.” What had happened, the Lord had let the sword come right up here against my heart. He didn't plunge it in. He's standing at the other end and He's saying, “Come my child. Come.” If you're ever to experience union with Christ in His death, it will not be a plunging, it may plunge because of your sin, but it won't be something the Lord does. He simply says, “Come. Come. Come.”

You have to take the step that threads you on the sword. He won't plunge it. You take that step. You take it and when that sword pierces you through, you'll realize then a little bit of what Paul meant when he said, “I am crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:20a). I have been and the effect continue. “Crucified with Christ.” Through himself, through his skill, through his talent, through his reputation, through his name, through all that he'd earned, by the years of his activity and diligence preparing for his life and his work and now by a revelation of Jesus Christ, the sword comes against his heart and he takes the step and he can say, “I am crucified with Christ,” and he could add, “I'm buried with Him, I'm quickened with Him, I'm raised with Him, and I'm seated with Him. Nevertheless I live yet not but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20).

A hidden life. The people that saw Paul of Tarsus did not realize that Christ was living in him. He did, the Church did, and the Lord Jesus did, but the people didn't. The jailer at Philippi that had him scourged didn't see that. It was hidden to the jailer. The people that stoned him three times, they didn't see it. The people that pulled him out of the water when he was ship wrecked and clung long after he would have gladly have let go and slipped to be with the Lord in the cold water of the Mediterranean, but he hung on because of his commitment to the Lord, until he was rescued. They didn't know who they were pulling out of the water. A person who was crucified with Christ, buried with Him and quickened with Him and raised with Him and seated with Him. All they saw was a little sopping wet Jew that they'd drawn up out of the water. They didn't have any idea who he was. It was all hidden.

And so it is that this position that wherein we receive God's blessing and we have our ministry is a hidden place “seated with Christ in the heavenlies.” It's hidden. Who's going to know it? Only those that have been born of God. Only those that have passed from death to life. Only that small minority. You see, Big Bill back there in Minneapolis didn't understand Christianity at all. He thought that it was the great church. He thought that it was the great auditorium, the large congregation, the splendid organization, the Bible school, the Sunday school. That's what he saw and he thought that that was Christianity.

Big Bill ought to go to China if he was still alive and some way find one or two of 25 million or 50 million or 75 million that ride under the sword of Communism in China have prevailed and survived and love and serve Jesus Christ proving that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Now, it's that hidden company that are going to overcome. Not because they're going to use worldly methods, not because they're going to have a better organization, but simply because they have found their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and with one another and are going to be able to stand for Him even as our brethren in China have stood in some of the fiercest persecution since the time of our Lord Jesus. Oh, I'm so glad I'm part of that number. I'm so glad. And I trust you are hungry for the hidden life, the hidden relationship and somehow God is going to stir your heart because all other relationships only have their meaning by our vertical relationship with the Lord. Nothing else has significance or value.

Father of Jesus, we covered a lot of ground tonight in our attempt to see and understand the hidden things of Thyself what Thou art doing in our day and in our time. And where this life of blessing is and what our position is in our union with the Lord Jesus Christ that it's there in this hidden relationship that the world doesn't understand and can't comprehend what the Apostle Paul exhibited when he testified, "I'm crucified in Christ nevertheless that Christ liveth in me." So may it be, Father, that this company comprise that nucleus here in this city, in this area, who are going to live this hidden life through the glory and honor and praise of the Lamb that was slain. We thank Thee Father, we ask Thy blessing upon them, and we're praying that as we think together, we'll be taught, we'll be instructed, we'll be guided, and the truth will become a living reality to us. In Jesus' name.

* Reference such as: Delivered at Camp Perkins, Stanley, Idaho on Wednesday, July 27, 1988 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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