

2 Corinthians 4:18 (Robert (Bob) Thonney) 216446

Chicago Conference: 1988, The Glories of Christ (4:18)

Address—R. Thonney

2nd Corinthians chapter 4 for one verse. 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 18. Well, we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. In a verse in the book of the Acts, chapter 26. Just one verse from this chapter we'll just mention. To get the connection that Paul is recounting before King Agrippa. The story of his conversion in this chapter. And how he saw that light from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun. And when he comes down to verse 19, this is the verse I'd like to read. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient. Unto the heavenly vision. My desire this afternoon is to go briefly to the Book of Hebrews. To meditate, first of all. On the many, many glories of our Lord Jesus Christ. I feel very insufficient and even speaking on such a topic. But Oh dear brethren, we're going to glory in Him for all eternity, and so it should be right to that we glory in Him both here and now. And so we see in that first verse I read in First Corinthians that Paul. Was looking not at the things that were seen, but the things that were not seen. He says the things that are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen are eternal. We're surrounded by a very materialistic world. Material advantage is the whole mainstream. Of life, especially in the North American culture, materialism, and it necessarily affects us to some degree, dear brother, I have to confess it for myself. But Paul says here we look not on those things which are seen, but on those things which are not seen. Our desire here this afternoon is. In some measure to take your eyes. From those things that are seen and put them on those things that materially. Are not seen. You know it says in Hebrews Chapter 11 That faith is the substance of those things that are not seen, the evidence of those things that are not seen. In other words, faith which is based on the word of God. If you have a word from God about a specific thing, you can view that thing. In a more real way than you view. Those things that you own materially and can say that there are my material possessions, that is faith. It makes it real. And So what we are going to speak of on the person of our Lord Jesus, my desire is that His glorious person may become more real to our souls. You know, we talk a lot about the Lord, dear brethren. But how much do we really know him? I have to hang my head sometimes. And say we're going to meet him face to face any moment now. But how much do I know him to know him very much yet? Even that was the ardent desire of the Apostle Paul. That I may know him. Paul, you don't know him. What would He say? He would say, yes, I do know Him, but oh, I want to know Him so much more. And Oh dear brethren, to think as we've been singing that He is the center and Son of God's universe of bliss, and to think that our eyes and our hearts are often detracted from His glory and set on things down here.

Really. Is unthinkable. Paul got a glimpse of that glory and he said afterwards. I am not disobedient to that heavenly vision, if we can only get a vision. Of that blessed, glorious person of our Lord Jesus Christ. I can assure you, dear young people, that we're not going to have to do a lot of exhorting that you shouldn't go after the things of this world. There is exhortation in Scripture about such things, but it won't have to be repeated many times, because your eyes will be on something of far, far superior worth. When I see someone or if you see me. Going after the things of this world, he can be assured there's a heart that's not satisfied with that man that fills the whole universe with his glory. Is it possible that's what happens? You're young people, that's what happens. Dear older brother and sister in Christ, too, happens to us all. Our hearts are just the same, whether young or old. So I'd like to go over to the Book of Hebrews now. The first chapter to begin with. First verse. God, Who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past, under the Fathers, by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world's, Who being the brightness. Of His glory and the express image of His person. And upholding all things by the word of His power. When he had by himself purged our sins. Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. What beautiful. Scripture these verses are Dear brother, I look at these short little phrases of verse 3 just bows my soul and wonder at how. Full those words can be because it's Speaking of God's beloved Son. There's three words in those first 2 verses that kind of sum up those first 2 verses. God has spoken. This is probably the only book in the Bible that starts with God. God has spoken. Want to challenge each one here this afternoon when God speaks. Are your ears open? Especially to those who may not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Yet you're still here. I want to beg of you. For the well-being of your soul for all eternity, to open the ears of your heart to listen when God speaks. It says here briefly that God spoke in times past in other ways. The Old Testament He spoke by the prophets. Moses was a prophet, and right on down there were many prophets through whom God spoke. But now, the fullness of time, God has spoken to us in Son, God himself, and the person of his own beloved Son has come into this world, and through him we have the full, the complete revelation of all that Goddess. He has spoken in the fullest sense. I say he can speak in no fuller sense. Than he has already spoken in the person of his own beloved son. Notice the end of verse two. He has appointed him his own son to be the heir of all things, by whom also he made the world. He's the creator of all things. Now come down to verse three, who being the brightness of his glory. The full shining forth of the glory of God is the person of Christ. All that glory Solomon could say, the heaven and the heavens of the heavens cannot contain thee, much less this house that I have built. But the full shining forth of that person of our God is seen in the Lord Jesus. God has spoken to us.

In son the express image of his person. When the Lord Jesus was down here at the end of his earthly pathway. Philip asked him, Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. He said, Have I been so long with you, Philip? You have not known me. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. He is the exact image of his person. Knowing the Lord Jesus, you know God in every sense of the word. I love those verses in Second Corinthians chapter 4 that speak of the glory of God that shines in the face of Jesus Christ when I meditate on that cross where that face was so marred more than any man crowned with thorns bowed in death. The glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. Oh dear brethren, what a glorious, glorious person. But going on here in verse 3. Notice the next little phrase is upholding all things by the word of His power. When he had by himself purged our sins. Oh, I love the way that scripture unites those little phrases, upholding all things by the word of His power. And at the same time it speaks of him by himself purging our sins. Think of it, dear brethren, the same time He was hanging there during those three hours of darkness, under the judgment of God, purging our sins, at the same time He was upholding the universe in all its extension. Out here, brethren, when I get a glimpse of that glorious person. I just frustrated his feet. Worship Him, praise Him. What a

glorious person. How could we ever be ashamed of such a person? How could we ever? And yet this coward sometimes is ashamed. But Oh dear brethren, it's because we don't know Him sufficiently. That's why we get those feelings sometimes. And then it says at the end of verse three sat down. On the right hand of the Majesty on High, the new translation. I love the way it reads. Sat himself down on the right hand of the majesty on high, in virtue of a work that so completely finished, to the glory of God and for our eternal salvation, He himself, in virtue of that work, sat himself down. At the right hand of the majesty on high. All those words thrill my soul, dear brethren. I trust that they thrill yours as well. What a glorious, glorious person we have in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so in this chapter one, we have the Lord Jesus presented as God. We have that more directly spoken in verse eight. We're not going to read it now, but he's addressed as God. But now going on to chapter 2, we have the Lord Jesus address. Or spoken of. As man and as man as well, there is a real. Glory to his person, He is God, He is man blessedly, both in one person. And so here we have in chapter 2 we'll read from verse 5 unto the angels. Hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak? But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful? Him, or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him. Thou made us him a little lower than the angels.

Thou crownest him with glory and honor, and it set him over the works of thy hands. Thou has put all things in subjection under his feet, for in that he put all in subjection under him. He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He by the grace of God. Should taste death for every man. For it became him whom for whom are all things, and by whom are all things. In bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect. Through suffering. Here the apostle is bringing before us the Lord Jesus as man, and he quotes from the 8 Psalms Speaking of that coming glorious Kingdom. The Lord Jesus is going to inherit as man, and it says what is man that thou art mindful of him? What is man? Man is really, when you think of it, what is man? When we compare ourselves to the vastness of the universe, we're less than a speck of dust. In the universe, what is man? And yet it is man. Dear brethren, dear brother and sister, in the Lord Jesus, it's man. That's going to reign supreme in this universe in that coming day. That's not so very far off now. It's man, glorified man of flesh and bones at the right hand of God right now. It says here we see Jesus, You see him, dear brother. Do you see him, dear sister, as his glorious person fills the soul? Oh, dear brethren, problems melted away. They cannot stand before him. Problems seem great to us at times, too great to handle, just can't handle it any longer. But when we get into His presence, when we remove our thoughts from our self and our contemplating His glorious person, those problems. Melt away. Maybe they don't melt away, but we know from then on that it is not a question of our capability, but of that man to whom we are so gloriously united. Even here and now we see not yet all things put under him, the scripture says. No, it's not evident in the world around us today. The Lord Jesus is not owned in a public way. People name His name, but they do not really. Many of those that even name His name do not acknowledge His Lordship practically in their lives. They do not. But He still is. Even right now, dear young person He is, He has all things in subjection under His feet. That to me is a tremendous consolation when things. Appear so out of order. So confusing at times, whether we're Speaking of the things that happen in the world around. Or whether we're Speaking of those things that happen in Christ and them at large, or even amongst those of us who are gathered to the Lord precious name, there's things that are confusing. But to realize, Dear brethren, right here and now, the Lord Jesus has all things put in subjection under His feet right now. Do you believe it? Sometimes we take things into our own hands. And show that we really haven't let that precious truth sink down into the soul like it ought to. Oh, what a glorious person. Crown. We see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. He was made a little lower than the angels in his incarnation. He took the seed of Abraham. In other words, he was made.

And as a man, he was born here in this world as a man. He was not born as an Angel, no. And the human race? Is little lower than the angels. And so he took that place, so that he could taste death for us. Oh, to think of it, that that glorious person that came from heaven to take the form of our race, dear brethren, that glorious person. Died for our sins. What a marvelous, marvelous thing to let lay hold of the soul. It wasn't just any person, dear brethren. It was God's beloved Son, that one that is going to fulfill the universe. He's the one that died on Calvary and when God raised him. He raised him to the highest place that it is possible to occupy in the whole universe. And he crowned him with glory and honor. We see Jesus. Let that vision fill your soul, dear brother, dear sister, and the Lord Jesus. Do not be disobedient to that heavenly vision. We see Jesus and I say to you if you feel your poor heart is mine often has been drawn to things in this world, worldly attractions. I want to ask you again, I'm not going to get after you so much this afternoon. But I want to ask you to turn your eyes to contemplate. The glory of God's beloved Son, I tell you, when you see him, all else has to grow dim. It's not that anybody is going to force you into religious observation of different things that you're supposed to do. No, it's that your heart is going to be drawn after. His glorious person. And so we see the Lord Jesus here. Crowned with glory and honor as a man occupying the highest place in the whole universe. Chapter 4 of Ephesians it says, above all heavens, the Lord Jesus sits supreme. Doesn't it thrill your soul when you think that we are? Dear brethren, dear brother and sister, in the Lord Jesus we are right here and now. United to him. This is Christianity, brethren. This is what Christianity is. Christianity is not a religion that you list along with a bunch of other religions. No way. Christianity is Christ, and in a very special way, Christ occupying the highest place in the universe, having suffered death for us, having accomplished redemption, having made purgation for our sins. And so, dear brethren, that is the person that we want to speak about this afternoon. This book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers. At that time when the gospel was first preached and the day of the Pentecost, most of those that believed were Jewish believers. Says in Romans chapter one that the gospel is the power of God into salvation to the Jew first. And also to the Greek. And so there was great numbers, thousands. Of Jews who were saved at that time, those Jewish people. Had an earthly religion and a religion that was given of God. In the Old Testament, but as we read in our readings in Colossians chapter 2. And as we read here in the book of Hebrews, 2 Hebrews as well, we find that those. Rituals of that Old Testament religion, that Judaism. Were only shadows of him that was to come. It says that in chapter 2 of Colossians didn't really get down to that verse, but there's shadows of things to come. In other words, the Lord Jesus in Old Testament times, if you would have lived there, He hadn't come yet. But God was thinking of the Lord Jesus and if I could say it this way, God was.

Just trying in any way possible to display something of the glory of his Son. So he gave in the instructions to Israel those things that were foreshadows of the Lord Jesus. Beautiful foreshadows there are if you go back to the Old Testament now that we understand the new. And the theme of the Bible is the person of Christ. Then we understand the Old Testament. Sometimes give the illustration to the brethren down South. What would you think? Sometimes I go on a trip. In Bolivia, away a week, maybe a little bit more sometimes, and maybe I've called ahead and told my wife I'm getting home at a certain afternoon. You never tell exactly what's going to happen on the road there, so you can't fix an hour. But. Supposing at about 5:00 in the afternoon, she looks out the door and she sees a shadow coming up to the door. I'm approaching the door and as she rushes out the door, do you think she's going to stop to inspect the shadow? I don't think she'll do that. I know her well enough. And I say, dear brethren, this is exactly what the book of Hebrews is about. These Jewish people. Now that the glorious reality of the person of Christ had come, now that God had spoken in his Son, we're turning back to those what Scripture calls beggarly

elements of the law. Again, those things that were foreshadows, they were turning back. To that system of religion. And so Paul writes to him. We believe it is Paul. His name is never mentioned in this book. The Lord Jesus is the apostle that's mentioned in this book in the third chapter in the first verse. But it's not Paul that is mentioned. We believe it was he that wrote the book. But he never mentions his name at all because he wants Christ person to soul fill their vision, to soul fill their souls, that they would turn from those things that were shadows of things to come. And in the last chapter, we want to get over there after a while. We have what is spoken of as the camp. The camp is Judaism. It was that system of God-given religion in the Old Testament. But where? When the Lord Jesus came and presented himself, there was no room for him whatsoever. He was put out. The camp and therefore we have a call to go. To him outside the camp, and I want to clarify for especially for the young people here. Sometimes we use terms that we do not have well defined in our minds. Sometimes I've noticed that it seems that we mix up the words christen them and the Cam. And I just like to say that Chris and them includes every professor of Christ that includes us as well. It's not somebody in some place out there excluding us. It includes us as well. It's represented in Second Timothy chapter 2, where you have. The great House of profession says there, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity everyone that nameeth the name of Christ. Is in that great House of religious profession. We are never told to come out of that great house. We are told to purge ourselves in that house from vessels to dishonor. And so when we think of the camp, we realize that it is not the same circle that we're Speaking of when we're talking about Christendom. They might overlap, but the camp is Judaism because we are definitely told. By the scriptures to come outside the camp. Were to leave it. That system of religion that was fitted for man in the flesh, that system of religion which were a shadow of things to come, that system of religion that had no place for the Lord Jesus. Our place as believers in the Lord Jesus is so we're called to come out of the camp.

The only way to get out of the great House of Christendom would be to become an apostate to Christianity. It's the only way, and we cannot do that. We are in that house, dear brethren. We are part of the ruin, and our responsibility is to purge ourselves from that great from the vessels to dishonor within that great house. But why do I go into all these things? I just want to explain, especially for the benefit of those who are young. That the camp is Judaism. And that's why there is the definite call to come out of that. Principles of the camp Principles of Judaism have been incorporated. Into different sectors of Christendom. Yes, they have they're principles of the Kim. But I would like to say this as well, dear brethren, that we need to be exercised. Sometimes we speak of the camp as being those out there and we are not there speaking in a collective way. I think we need to speak in a way that exercises our conscience about the matter. What do I mean by that? Because I really believe that. Principles of the camp that can even come amongst those who profess to be outside of the camp. What do I mean? Sometimes when we go around and we are for breaking a bread meeting, just to put it very practically. And. We profess, dear brethren. The glorious person of the Lord Jesus is in the midst, and yet we sit in silence, in silence, in silence. And we wait for maybe two or three brethren to take all the part. Is not that a principle of the camp we need to be exercised about, dear brother? In the camp of Israel Judaism, there were only certain ones. That could do the priestly functions, but in Christianity every true believer is a priest born into God's family. And if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus, you should be exercised when we come together on Lords Day morning about taking part doesn't mean that you'll be taking part every time. I'm not saying that, but you should present yourself ready for the Lord's use to pronounce his praise if he should lay it on your heart. But if we just come and sit down and look to two or three brethren there to take the part. I say, dear brethren, I really believe that is one of the principles of the camp and we need to be exercised, hold these things and exercise. The call is to come out of that. And so when we see the glorious person of the Lord Jesus, dear brethren, and we see, on the other hand, that which the apostle in this book is calling those believers out of, because there was no place for the Lord Jesus in that system. Oh dear brethren, may the Lord preserve us from falling into. Rigid rules like we were speaking about in the Reading meeting, touch not. Taste not, handle not. This heart of mine has a very definite tendency, as well as all of our hearts, dear brethren, towards religious formality. And even as those gathered to the Lord's name, we can fall into religious formality without there being an exercise and a living present. Real apprehension of the glorious Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. That, we profess, is in the midst when we come together as gathered to His precious name. It's a burden of my soul, dear brethren, that his person may so fill our hearts that those formalities will drop off. We have instruction as to godly order in Scripture, but we need to keep simply the Scripture and not go beyond those those principles of godly order.

But beyond that, we're going to go, we're going back in principle to that which was an ordered. Set of principles in the Jewish religion and ordered. Set of system of worship. And so, dear brethren, and the measure. That we apprehend and value and in rejoice in the glory of God's beloved Son. Our hearts are going to come out of that system of things. And I like to go over to the 12Th chapter now of the book of Hebrews, 12Th and 13th chapter just briefly. To mention a few practical exhortations in view. Have all that we've spoken about the Lord Jesus? Hebrews chapter 12 and verse one. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about. With so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and feigned in your minds, ye have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin. Here we have an exhortation from the Apostle. He says, seeing we have this cloud of witnesses, he's referring to the 11Th chapter. And those Old Testament men of faith? That, as we read their histories are such an encouragement to us. I encourage you to read the 11Th chapter. And meditate individually on those different witnesses of faith, that cloud of witnesses. We have such a great cloud of witnesses around us to encourage us, but. Were not to put our eyes on anyone of them. Each one of them and some time of their life or another failed learned about in Sunday school failure of even Joseph that one who was such a perfect example, seemingly perfect example, the Lord Jesus beautiful example. Still there was a failure there and there's failures in any one of us too dear brethren, there's only one place that our eyes are directed. Says let us lay aside. Every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us. Let us run with patience. The race set before us. Oh, I love this challenge. There's a race set before you and me. Dear young person. Dear older person too. A race and a love. To see an older person who has run their full life through and are continuing the same vigor. Spiritually of desire after the things of Christ to still remember visiting dear brother Jackson down in Florida number of years ago before he passed away. He wasn't able to get out of his house any longer. He sat in an old armchair there and as I visited him he got talking about the Lord's coming and he was very weak and body and as he got talking about the Lord's coming he got more and more excited until he was completely. Forward and all of a sudden his body just kind of fell back. He was just too exhausted to go any further. His spirit was too young for his body. And you know, dear brethren, that really encourages me to see a brother who is still pursuing the goal at that age. But Oh dear young person, we have a goal before us, Christ in glory. No earthly goal should satisfy your soul. It's not worthy of you as a believer in the Lord Jesus. No, Sir. You know, I've sometimes said that it's so important for young people to get objectives firmly entrenched in their souls from their youth. If I'm going to start out on a race and I start out running this direction. And after I'm going that direction, this is a long distance race, I say, well, was the goal that way? Maybe it was over this way. Maybe I've been around over this way for a while, never run over that way for a while.

And then I think maybe I was right that first time, so I run back to the original course again. Then I have another thought. Maybe it's over on the other side. Nobody's going to ever win any kind of race and that kind of running.

And yet, sometimes in our lives, that's the kind of running we do.

clickbible.org