

# The Discoveries of an Awakened Soul

By Henry Mahan

**Bible Text:** Job 42:1-6

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“It is appointed unto men once to die.” I may die in an automobile accident. I may die in an airplane crash. I may die in a hospital room of a heart attack or cancer. I may die in this pulpit this morning. But I’m going to die one time.

“Man that is born of woman is a few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down, like a shadow, like a vapor, a mist.” But one life, one death.

“The body shall return to the dust from whence it came and the soul to God who gave it.” But I will die one time, just once. And then I will be judged one time. “It is appointed unto men once to die. After this my judgment, my judgment.”

“Everyone shall give an account of himself to God. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” I will stand there one time, just one time. There are not going to be an appeal to a higher court because, of course, there is no higher court. When I stand before him I am standing before him to whom all judgment has been committed. The Father judges no man. There will be no appeal to the Father, to the Holy Ghost or to the angels. Christ’s word will be final.

And I shall be once received into glory for all eternity or once sent to hell for all eternity, one time, one time. “There is a great gulf fixed and those that would pass from thence to us cannot and from us to you cannot.” One time.

That is sobering.

I was reading a message by a preacher this past week and these statements were made and they were just so sobering. I just sat for a moment, left my Bible open and stared straight ahead. How sobering. I’m born one time. I live on this earth one time. The fashion of this world fadeth away. And I die one time, just one time. That’s it. And I stand before God almighty at the judgment one time. And I am going to hear his voice say, “Enter ye blessed into the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world by my Father.” Or I’ll hear him say, “Depart from me. I never knew you. Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Now, then, as I said the greatest affairs of life occur one time. They are performed one time. In the midst of all of this from that time in 1926, August the 19<sup>th</sup>, when I was born, when I gasped the first breath and by God's grace I've been breathing, Jay, ever since. How long? From now I don't know. It really doesn't matter. I believe I can say with Simeon, "I'm ready to depart. I've seen thy salvation."

But from that first moment, from that first moment until I hear him say, "Depart from me," or "Enter, ye blessed," there is an event...there is an event which occurs only once, only once, that has the most profound effect on all these others. There is an event which occurs which has a profound effect on all these others. The result of this one event determines whether or not my birthday is a happy day and a blessed day, whether I was born to joy or whether it can be said of me of which it was said of many, "Better if he had never been born."

There was joy when a man child was brought into the world, but if I don't experience what I'm going to talk about this morning it had been better if I had have never been born. It would have been better if I had never been born.

Now, you think about that. There are some here in this congregation and some who will hear this message in other places of whom it can be said, "It was a glad day when God let you come into the world." But there are many of whom it can be said, "Better if you had never been born."

And then whether my life on earth is lived by the faith of the Son of God or whether my life on earth is a living death is determined by this one event, one event. And whether I die in faith or die in despair or whether to die is gain or eternal loss is determined by this one event. And whether, as I stand before him, there is no condemnation or whether I cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on me and hide me from his face is determined by this one event.

You say, "Preacher, you are building this one even up mighty high."

You'll see in a moment why. Nothing will ever happen to you in the past, present and future that is as important as what I'm going to talk about today. Nothing. Nothing. And whether I am raised to the resurrection of life or whether the resurrection of damnation depends on this monumental and blessed event.

And do you know what it is? It's called regeneration. It's called the new birth. It's called regeneration. It is the quickening, awakening, convicting work of the Spirit of God. It is a confrontation with the living Lord. I'm not talking about religion now. I'm talking about meeting Christ. I'm talking about God putting his hand on me. He touched me, shackled by a heavy burden, bent beneath a load of guilt and shame. Then the hand of Jesus touched me. He touched me and now I am no longer the same. He touched me.

If like the Samaritan woman I meet the Lord, if like Zacchaeus I meet the Lord, if like blind Bartimaeus I meet the Lord, if like Peter of old, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

“Whom do men say that I am?”

“Well, they’ve got a lot of things to say about you.”

“Whom do you say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

“Thou art the Christ. Thou art the Christ, the son of the Living God.”

It says in Ephesians 2:1: “You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.”

This is the day I am talking about, the day of quickening, the day of regeneration, the day of awakening, the day when God raises the dead, the day when God gives a man ears to hear and a heart to understand and eyes to see. “You hath he called.”

“Whom he foreknew he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, whom he predestinated he called,” in that irresistible, invincible awakening call of his Spirit.

Paul said to those in Thessalonica, he said, “I know, beloved, your election of God. Our gospel came not to you in Word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, in power, in the Holy Ghost to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light.”

Abraham heard that call. God said, “Abraham, Abraham, get thee out of thy father’s house and away from thy kindred to a land I will show thee.”

Moses heard that call. Walking on that mountain one day and God said to him, “Take off your shoes. You are on holy ground. I’ve got some things to say to you.”

Moses heard that. Matthew heard that call sitting at the receipt of custom busy about his business. Oh, he like all the rest of them were religious. He was religious. And our Lord Jesus Christ walked by and said, “Matthew, Matthew, follow me.”

Peter, James and John heard that call down by the seashore mending their nets, hard working fishermen, men, honest men, supporting their families and so forth as the world goes. And our Lord came by and said, “Follow me. I’ll make you fishers of men.”

Saul of Tarsus was high on the ecclesiastical ladder, a Pharisee of Pharisees, a Hebrew of Hebrews. He had a standard you couldn’t meet, fasted prayed, tithed, taught Scripture. He was a scholar in the Bible on his road to Damascus with hate in his heart, prejudice and bigotry, going to destroy the name of Jesus Christ and all who claimed that name.

And our Lord said, “Saul, Saul, Saul? Hold it right there.”

Oh, I tell you, what a day, what a day, what a day.

It may be, it may be. I don't know. It may be he will call you. He has passed by a whole lot of folks in his judgment, in his purpose, in his sovereignty. He doesn't have to call you.

Moses says, "Lord, show me your glory. Show me your glory."

Moses has seen enough to satisfy most of us. He had seen a sea part and folks walk through it on dry land. He has seen that sea close up and drown an army. He had seen the first born in every family die in the land of Egypt where there was no blood on the door. He had seen water come out of a rock. He had seen bread fall from heaven.

That would leave us talking for two or three lifetimes, wouldn't it? Bragging about what we had seen. But Moses knew something most folks don't know. He had never really seen God's glory. See, God's glory is an eternal glory. It's not a temporary glory. That bread will rot. That bread from heaven will rot. But that eternal bread from heaven, if you eat that you will live forever. That water from the rock will dry up and those who drink will thirst again, but there is a water from the rock Christ Jesus that if you drink thereof you will never thirst again. That's what Moses wanted to talk about.

Those people that he preserved from the hand of the Egyptians finally fell. Every one of them their carcasses perished in the wilderness. But there is a redemption from the hand of an eternal enemy. If he redeems you that way you will never die.

And Moses says, "Lord, show me, show me, show me your glory."

Most folks have played church so long they have confused the glory of God with the glory of the flesh or tradition or ceremony or beauty. Moses wanted to see God's glory and the Lord said, "All right, Moses. All right. You hide over there behind a rock."

We're not hand holding buddies like most folk claim. We are not co-partners or co-pilots.

"I am God and you are still a man. Now, you just hide over there in the rock because you can't look on me and live. And I'll pass by you and I will cause my...what do you want to see, Moses?"

"I want to see your glory."

"I'll cause my goodness to pass before you. I will be merciful. I will be merciful. I will be merciful. That's my glory."

God's glory is his redemptive mercy. God's glory is his mercy to sinners in Christ. "I will be merciful. I won't damn everybody. I'll be merciful and I will be gracious. I won't damn everybody. There is going to be a people in glory. I will be gracious. I will

be merciful,” now watch it, “to whom I will be merciful. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. So it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”

So I’m saying to you this: Listen to me. Listen to me. There is a meeting. There is a confrontation. There is a blessed event called regeneration, called awakening by the old writers because of the quickening of the dead soul. There is a time. There is a time when God in his mercy visits some of Adam’s race. And he calls them.

“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” Noah.

And all through the Scripture you find these people who found grace. Gideon found grace, it said, in the eyes of the Lord. Isaiah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. There is a time when God is pleased in his sovereign mercy to cross the sinner’s path. And when he does that sinner will never be the same.

The Samaritan woman went running down to her village and she said, “I found a man who told me all I ever did. Is not this the Christ?”

Our Lord went down into the land of the Gadarenes. And there was a man they couldn’t tame. They chained him. He tore his clothes off and tore the chains off. He was mad, insane. He lived in the tombs, out in the graveyard. He went down to the land of the Gadarenes and he crossed that old boy’s path. And he, whom no man could tame, met his master. He tamed him. He tamed him.

I was with a blessed preacher last week who was in Vietnam for 15 months in the third Marine division. He was in the bloodiest, blackest, dirtiest, vilest part of it without one R&R for 15 months. And he came out of there scarred, his mind and body scarred. He came out of there broken and destroyed completely, on drugs and dope and alcohol and insanity and you name it. For 18 months he lay in a mental hospital and the doctor told his wife, “He will never...he will never do anything again. Forget him. He will be a vegetable as long as he lives. Somebody will have to feed him and clothe him and bathe him. He will never do anything but stare straight ahead.”

That’s man’s conclusion. And left to man that is all he will ever do. But my Lord crossed his path and restored his mind and restored his health and raised him up and taught him his gospel. And he is preaching the gospel, pastoring a church, one of the sweetest fellows you ever met. He sat right over there about two months ago, he and his wife and two children.

I know what my Lord can do if he ever crosses your path. He may. I don’t know. He may not. But if he does he said, “My sheep will hear my voice. They will hear my voice and they will follow me. They will follow me.” They will follow me, the voice of conviction, the voice of conversion, the voice of revelation, the voice of repentance. It is a confrontation with the living Lord, with the living Lord.

I am nothing. I don't...it's not a confrontation with me. That's what most of us got in our early days. We met a preacher and we listened to his theology and we accepted it. And we are in the same mess he is in. Our Lord said, "You compass sea and land to make a proselyte to your religion. When you have made him he is two fold more the child of hell than you are."

We went to church and they said, "Don't you want to go to heaven?"

"Well, I kind of think I would later on, but not right now."

"Well, we just accept Jesus and he will be your fire escape in the event that you need him."

And we did that. We accepted Jesus and got baptized and joined the church and learned some doctrine according to where we were going.

That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about when a religious sinner or a rebellious sinner...I'm talking about when a pulpit sinner or a gutter sinner...I'm talking about when a nice lady or a harlot...I'm talking about when a child of Adam, a child of wrath meets with, has a confrontation with, his path is crossed by the Lord Jesus Christ on purpose, called according to his purpose. Help us. It wasn't no accident. God met him.

It wasn't any accident on that Damascus road. God met Saul of Tarsus. God intended to meet him. It wasn't an accident that he as sitting on that well. He went there on purpose. Our Lord doesn't do anything by accident. Everything he does is according to the good pleasure of his own will.

"Called according to his purpose."

Well, I'll tell you this. If that ever happens, if it ever happens, now you can get religion and play church the rest of your life and swear on a stack of Bibles at the judgment that you ought to be saved. You can even make an appeal to God himself by saying, "I preached in your name, cast out devils and did many wonderful works." You can join the church and be a nice little fellow and be accepted by the community and perish in your sins. But if you ever meet him, whom to know is life eternal, something will happen, something will happen, something will happen.

Old Barnard said it will be life changing. It will be habit changing. It will be soul changing. It will be mind changing. It will be direction changing, goal changing. God meets a sinner.

Well, there are some discoveries. Number one, every soul in enlightened by the Holy Ghost, enlightened by the Spirit of God on purpose, every soul who meets with the king of heaven, every soul that meets with King Jesus, every soul that has a personal

confrontation with the Lord of glory gets a clear view, a clear view, an unmistakably clear view of his own guilt. That's right. Your guilt. My guilt.

Old Isaiah said, "I saw the Lord. I saw the Lord. I saw the Lord and I cried, 'Oh, woe is me. I am a man of unclean lips.'"

Isaiah 64:6: "We are all as an unclean thing." We are like that old leper of old out yonder separated from the people, or ought to be, crying, "Unclean! Unclean! Unclean!"

We talk no more of man's dignity, but of his depravity. We quit referring to ourselves and other sons of Adam as good men, good men. "He's a good man."

That word will disappear from your vocabulary if you ever meet Christ because there is none good but God.

One lady told me one time, she said, "I quit. I quit talking about everything being wonderful." She said, "I used to say, 'This is wonderful and that's wonderful and he's wonderful,' until I found that Christ's name is called wonderful. Now nothing," she says, "is wonderful compared to him. He is wonderful."

Boy, we suspected that the streams were a little polluted, but when we met the Lord we found out, Jay, the fountain was polluted. That was a shock. It wasn't just my deeds. It wasn't just my actions, but my very nature was rotten, my nature.

When a man meets the Lord God every soul awakened by the Holy Spirit will cry, "My sins, my sins, my sins are ever before me."

A sure cure for gossip is to meet the Lord. And you'll quit talking about anybody but yourself. "Oh, wretched, wretched man that I am."

A clear view.

Secondly, every awakened soul, enlightened by the Holy Spirit makes a discovery, not only of the guilt of his own personal sin, but he discovers—listen to me—that all, that in God's sight all of his actions are evil, even his righteousness.

Look at Isaiah 64:6. Let's listen to it. He says in Isaiah 64:6, "We are all, we are all," that's bar none, "We are all, universal, all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." And the Hebrew word there is not a word that you use in present company.

That's right, Charlie, filthy rags, disposable rags, not fit for further use.

This is offensive. But it is so. It is so. I don't care what anybody says. It is so. My prayers, my gifts, my deeds, my tears, my knowledge and all things in which I gloried are rubbish in God's sight.

“I can’t buy that, preacher.”

I know you can’t, but if you ever meet God you’ll see it. You’ll see it.

Isaiah did. Isaiah chapter five he is letting everybody have it. “Woe is you, woe is them, woe is somebody else.” Five times he uses that phrase. When he met the Lord he said, “Woe is me.”

Daniel said, “When I saw the Lord my comeliness....” You’re proud of your righteousness. You’re proud of the fact that you have tithed ever since you were a little paper boy. You’re proud of the fact that you have never missed a day in Sunday school. You are proud of the fact that you won three souls to Jesus. You’re proud of all these things.

I tell you, old Daniel said, “My comeliness melted into corruption.”

The apostle Paul said, “All of my things in which I gloried became my shame. I count them but rubbish that I may win Christ and be found in him. In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.”

I never thought a thought with which God was pleased. You haven’t either.

I never did do a deed that was acceptable, of itself, in the sight of God. I never gave a gift that was without sin. I have never prayed a prayer that was holy in God’s sight.

That’s right, Chet, not in myself.

You say, “Well, what makes our prayers acceptable? What makes our gifts acceptable?”

Christ!

It’s like to me that would get through some heads after a while if we kept saying it. Christ. He is the great high priest. He is the mediator. He is the justifier. He is the sanctifier. He is our righteousness. In the flesh no man, not even a Moses, can please God. No way.

If you ever meet Christ you will discover that. And you will repent not only of what you have done, but of what you are.

My friend, some time when you feel like you are closest to God you are furthest away. And when you are weak then you are strong because when you have nothing you lean on Christ. When you are nothing you trust Christ. When you are stripped naked you run to Christ. That’s right. And God is pleased with him, Bob. He’s pleased with Christ. He’s not pleased with me.

I get out there on my own, you know, and I studied today and did a little work and preached a pretty good sermon, prayed a pretty good prayer and feel pretty good about it and I'm furthest from God I have ever been. I'm out there by myself trying to establish a righteousness. But when I feel my guilt and my sin and my shame and I run. I say, "Lord, have mercy. Be merciful. Don't look on me for what I am, but for what Christ is." I have the Father's forgiveness.

"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"He that hideth his sin, covereth his sin shall be consumed and destroyed."

Every soul, thirdly, every soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit not only gets a clear view of his personal guilt and it will make you sick, it will, it will make you sick. It ought to. God says he spews it out of his mouth. It makes God sick. It ought to make us sick. Every soul enlightened by the Holy Ghost sees that even his righteousnesses are filthy rags. All his actions are evil.

"In the flesh no man can please God."

He repents of his sins and his sins and his righteousness. Thirdly, every soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit sees the futility, the absolute futility of all efforts and resolutions and vows to do any better.

Well, I tell you what: From this day on...I heard them over there in World War II. Before you would hit the beach, you know, and send those Marines in, they would say, "Lord, let me live through this battle and I will serve you the rest of my life."

You ain't going to do it your whole life. That's right.

"Lord, if you let Suzy get well or Billy get well a little bit, get well, I'll just tithe. Lord, I'll give 20%."

You ain't going to do it. You are bribing God.

Oh, the futility. Listen to the next verse in Isaiah 64:6. "We are as an unclean thing. Our righteousnesses are filthy rags. Like the leaf we all do fade like the leaf."

Verse seven, "None that call on his name, none that stirreth up himself to take hold of God like the river." We follow the path of least resistance. That's the reason I'm glad God doesn't let me live 800 years on the earth. They'd be so mean even earth couldn't stand them. We get mean enough in three score and 10 years. Our iniquities heap upon one another in three score and 10 years, we get rotten enough without God letting us live that long.

I would, but cannot sing. I would, but cannot pray.  
Satan meets me when I try and scares my soul away.

I would, but I can't repent though I endeavor oft.  
This stony heart will never relent unless God makes it soft.

I would, but cannot love though shown by love divine.

No argument has power to move a heart so cold as mine.

I would, but cannot rest in God's most holy will.  
I know what he appoints is best. I murmur at it still.

Oh, could I but believe? Could I but believe? Then all would easy be.  
I would, but I cannot, Lord, relieve the help must come from thee.

My help must come from thee.

And what he discovers...and fourthly, he discovers this. He discovers every soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit justifies—listen to me—he justifies the judgment and wrath of God upon him. Now, listen to me. Let me tell you something. Turn to Psalm 51, verse three and four. This is so. This is so. Psalm 51. Every soul.

Will God punish sin? Yes.

Should God punish sin? Yes.

Should God punish my sins?

Should men go to hell? Yes.

Should my son go to hell?

Uh, oh. Hold it.

“Preacher, I was going with you there for a while.”

Should I go to hell?

Well, I tell you, if you ever meet the Lord, the answer will be, “Yes.”

David did. He said in Psalm 51, verse three: “I acknowledge my transgression. My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight that thou, God almighty, might be justified when he speaks and clear when he judges.”

“It is the Lord. Let him do what he will.”

That's what David is saying there. He is saying, "I justify God. Whatever God does with me I say, 'That's right. That's right.'"

There will be a day. Don't let me upset you too much. But I'm telling you what is going to happen. There will be a day when every true believer will shout Hallelujah while God sends sinners to hell. That's right. Read the book of Revelation. There will be a time coming when the smoke of the torment of religious rebels will rise up forever and over and the saved will shout, "Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. True and righteous are his judgments." There will be a day coming when every believer who sees one of his closest friends or loved ones cast into hell will justify God in his condemnation. And that starts right here. That starts here.

I told some folks—listen to me—these little babies in the nursery, my little grandson, your little grandson, Charlie, the rest of them, they got everything they will ever have. Aden will never grow another finger or a toe. That's right. He'll never grow another arm or leg. He'll never grow another eye. No. He's got everything it takes to be a full grown six foot five inch 240 pound football player. That's right, everything.

I've got an arm just like his. His is tiny, frail, weak. But it's there.

"What are you saying, preacher?"

I'm saying when a person meets the Lord, is regenerated and born again by the Spirit of God, comes to faith in Christ Jesus, he has everything he will have in heaven, everything: love, joy, peace, sanctification, redemption, righteousness, justification, grace, faith everything, everything. It's in the bud, in the bloom, in the flower, maybe not in the fruit yet, to a degree, but he has...

"He hath made us meet." That word M-double E-T, sufficient, "to inherit the saints in light, the inheritance of the saints in light."

That little boy in there has got everything he will ever have. And these believers in Christ, they have...if you don't love here you will never love in heaven. Now you will love there to a great degree, to a greater degree because that which is made perfect, you see, "We see through a glass dimly. We know in part. We prophesy in part. When that which is perfect is come I'm going to be known as I have been known. But I have been known."

And here on earth if you can't justify God in his judgments against sin, you will never reign with him because he is not going to reign with somebody that is opposed to him and what he does. It's going to be, "Amen. Amen. True and righteous."

That's just the same thing when you come preaching God's elective grace and some fellow bucks it. He'll never reign with Christ. There ain't no way. God's not going to have an opponent on the throne with him. God is going to cast all of his enemies into

hell. Everything that worketh or maketh a lie is going to be divided from Christ. You're not going to question his righteousness in glory, his judgment, his sovereignty, his elective grace or anything else, his eternal purpose, his will.

You talk about man's will, free will, all the will you want to down here. In heaven it's God's will. If you're not broken here you will never reign up there. That's right. God begins the work here and when a person is born into the family of God he is born with everything. He is born complete in Christ. And what we enjoy later in glory is perfected, but it is already ours now, already.

He justifies God.

Now watch this, last of all. And every soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit sees the wisdom of God in Calvary's cross. Turn to 1 Corinthians one, 1 Corinthians chapter one. He sees the wisdom in Calvary's cross. Calvary's cross is not a martyr's cross, it is not a reformer's cross it is not even the cross of one who is setting an example. It is the cross of a redeemer, of a substitute, of a sin offering, of a sanctified, of an atonement whereby God can be just and justify the ungodly.

1 Corinthians one: "We preach Christ," verse 23. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jew a stumbling block, unto the great foolishness, unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Christ crucified is the wisdom of God."

I see in that cross how God can be just and justify. I see how that every attribute of God—and preachers aren't talking today about God's attributes. Therefore they are not preaching the God of the Bible.

If you preach the God of the Bible you've got to preach his attributes. Who is he?

When I come to you and you say, "I want you to tell you about a certain person."

I say, "Well, who is he? Describe him."

Well, you begin to give his attributes. He is 56. He is 6'4". He's blonde headed. He is blue eyed. He is an engineer. He has a wife and six children and so forth and so on. You are describing the man. You are giving me his attributes. He is a kind man. He is an honest man. He is a truthful man. He is this, that and the other.

Oh, I know him after a while. You keep telling me about him. I'll know him.

But all I hear preachers say today is, "God, God, God, God."

Well, who is God? Who is the living God? Describe him.

That's what they said to David. They said, "David, our gods are down there in the temples and the shrines where we put them."

And they said, "Where's your God?"

David said, "Our God is in the heavens. He hath done what he pleased." He started describing his God.

He is holy, immaculately, infinitely, immutably holy. He is sovereign. He does what he pleases with whom he pleases when he pleases. He is just and righteous. He is love and mercy. He is wrath and kindness. He is all these things.

Well, how in the world can he be both wrath and love? How can he be truth and mercy? How can he be righteous and just? The cross will show you that, Bud, if you ever meet Christ. It will show you. That's where truth and mercy met together. That's where righteousness and peace kissed one another, at Calvary.

I see the wisdom of Calvary, the attributes of God in Calvary.

I'm going to close in three minutes. But I want to give you something think of because I think this is important. The discoveries of a redeemed soul, when a man bows to Christ. That's the discoveries of an awakened soul. He needs that Lord. And like Thomas he says, "My Lord and my God."

Like Saul of Tarsus he says, "What will you have me do?"

God takes the argument away. He takes the rebellion out. He takes the starch out. He takes the pride and he puts you in the dust.

"Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth."

And then what does he discover? Well, he makes thousands of discoveries. He discovers God's eternal grace and mercy and love and providence and purpose. He discovers his rest, his peace, his kindness, his comfort, his continual care. He discovers all these things in Christ. He finds in him a refuge firm and strong. He finds in him a foundation that will not move. He finds in him a hope, a hope, a good hope through grace. He finds all. He discovers every day new mercies, new blessings.

Well, let me say this to you. Shockingly, he discovers he still has an old nature. Oh, that's a shock. Spurgeon said...the great Charles Haddon Spurgeon who was converted that Sunday morning over 100 years ago in that little Primitive Methodist Chapel listening to a man preach who wasn't a pastor or a pulpiter, just cry and look to Christ. He said, "God saved me. I met Christ." And he said, "I bowed right then." I said right then, "I'll never sin again. I'll never commit another sin."

He said, "I know it was ignorance, but I said it anyhow. ' I'll never sin again. I'm going to walk with God from now on in holiness and purity and righteousness.'"

"Oooh," he said, "Monday morning I woke up to the most awful discovery. I found out I was still a sinner."

I heard a man say last week, a professing Christian. He said, "I've got a sinner friend that said this...."

Now, what do you mean by a sinner friend? You mean you're not one?

Ain't that awful. They define Christians and sinners. That's bad division because if you're not a sinner you are sure not a Christian. All men are sinners. All men have sinned. You're not without sin.

And Spurgeon said, "I discovered, oh, I discovered I was still a sinner. I still had an old nature. I still had an old nature to contend with that was in conflict. It was doing battle with me. I thought things just like I did before. Oh, I discovered I still had an old nature."

Paul said that. And then he discovered you discover something else. You discover that all men do not rejoice over your salvation, even religious people.

I had a friend one time and, boy, he was a drunk. He was...he wasn't worth shooting. And his family was all praying. They were all good Baptists and Methodists, you know. And they wanted him to be saved.

Well, he came and heard the gospel here and really was converted, came to a knowledge of Christ and loved his grace. And he went back to that family and, you know, they had more fellowship with him when he was drunk than when he came to know Christ. They didn't want him to get really saved. They just wanted him to get religion. They didn't want him to commit himself to Christ. They didn't want him to become a fanatic. You know, they just wanted him to get what they had. And they turned him out.

"Well, you're too religious for us, you know, too much committal. We don't believe in this depravity and election and sovereignty and redemption and living for God's glory. We don't...we just believe in going to church when you want to, you know, and I mean, when you have to not when you want to. We believe in just keeping the holidays, not all days, as holy days."

You will find out. You really come to know Christ, those who you thought knew Christ, they'll turn their back on you. They'll spit your name out. That's right. They got a religion. They got a zeal for God, but they are ignorant. And they liked you better when you didn't know Christ so they could wing you.

And then you'll discover something else. You will discover that spiritual growth is so slow. It's slow, isn't it?

Oh, I tell you. You can get religion and master it in about two years. That's right. You can have a false conversion and learn your system of doctrine and a system of soul winning and a system of does and don'ts and fundamentalism, how long to wear your hair, how long to wear your dress or how long to do this, that and the other and when to do this and all these different systematic, fundamental, basic and so and so of religion. You can learn that in about six months. You can be preaching in about six months or teaching Sunday school in modern religion. That's right. You can pick that up fast.

Well, let me tell you something. If you ever meet the living Lord in glorious redeeming grace, you will find out that the mysteries of the gospel get greater every day.