

The Two Ministries 2 Corinthians 4 and 5

by John Nelson Darby

John Nelson Darby's sermon explores the two ministries in 2 Corinthians, emphasizing the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and the believer's hope in Christ's glory.

Scripture: John 14:3, Romans 8:17, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 5:1, Ephesians 1:13-14, Philippians 3:20-21, Hebrews 10:19-22, 1 Peter 1:10-13, 1 John 3:2

Topics: "Hope in Christ", "Ministry of the Spirit"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the duality of ministries in 2 Corinthians 4 and 5, contrasting the ministry of the Spirit with that of the Old Testament prophets. He explains that true ministry requires personal possession of the truths we share, highlighting the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in revealing the glory of God through Jesus Christ. Darby illustrates how believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, are called to reflect Christ's glory and await His return, while navigating the trials of life as vessels of His grace. He encourages Christians to recognize their identity in Christ and the hope of eternal glory, urging them to live in light of this truth.

Transcript

The apostle speaks here of the ministry that he had received. A man of like passions with us, he was one who in a wonderful manner lived with God so as to carry out this ministry; he laboured more abundantly than they all. Still what he ministered we receive; only he was a vessel filled in a more than ordinary degree. But this same blessed truth, as it especially regards the testimony, is committed to us, whatever the measure, whether the greatest as an instrument or the least, and therefore the thing that he ministered is ours; so that we are vessels each one in his own little measure of that with which he was filled.

The ministry of the Spirit, contrasted with that of the Old Testament prophets, shews that the things must be possessed for ourselves before they can be ministered to others. Now this is not characteristic of the prophetic ministry; for the prophets found that it was not to themselves that they ministered. There are three steps in 1 Peter 1:10-13 as to this. First, the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glories that should follow. Next, these things are now reported unto us by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, that is, after Christ was glorified. Then we are to have girded loins and "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." We stand between the sufferings and the glories, with the Holy Ghost sent down, waiting for the revelation of Jesus Christ, in the distinct confession therefore of what the sufferings of Christ have

wrought; and our loins are to be girded while here.

The apostle here shews how the testimony is carried out; it is not "thus saith Jehovah," but it is carried out in the place in which we stand as possessing the things ministered. "God who commanded," etc., hath "shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Paul had had a revelation of Christ in him, "when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." The revelation of Christ in him was that by which he might preach Him, and it was not only to him but in him - this latter of course in a remarkable way; but in every one of us according to our measure. To Paul it was the revelation of Christ in glory; but He was revealed as Son of God, and this is the character of the testimony. It is the expression in the power of the Holy Ghost of what we have in Christ. It is the ministry of the "gospel of the glory of Christ," "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We may see its character and where it sets us. God speaks from heaven; it is not law. His voice then shook the earth: only once more He will shake not earth only but also heaven, so that now we have the last things. It is the glory he is speaking of in contrast with Moses who put a veil over his face. His ministry was of death and condemnation, and even that reflection of glory man could not look at, because it came as a legal claim upon man, a demand or exaction from God. If it had come alone, man might have thought he could stand it; but, accompanied by the glory, it was impossible. The moment the glory of God, the light of God, shines into a man's heart, the conscience is awakened: the light once there, the man cannot stand in God's presence. Mount Sinai was the administration of it. The ministry of the law (2 Cor. 3) was but the glory of the reflection; all was condemnation, because it was God requiring from men what they ought to be. Man must either hide himself from God when he hears His voice, or hide God from himself.

246 The "glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" is not a little bit coming down with Moses, but a man glorified in heaven who was just before on the cross. Such is the great groundwork of the whole standing of this ministry. When we see the glory of God, we see it in the face of Jesus Christ who hung on the cross - it means that. Sin and death and the grave and the power of Satan are all put away together; and now He who has done it has gone far above all heavens. It is not that God is requiring from men what they ought to be, but He is giving to men from Himself. All passes exclusively between God and His Son on the cross. The only part we had in it was the sins that He bore and the hatred that He met with. That is our sin, our comfort too. There sin had reached its climax in antagonism to that blessed One, and there I see God putting away sin; the work is done, death left behind, and from the glory where He has been received comes the testimony that sin is gone, the work accomplished. Man can now be in the glory, and I get the witness of complete redemption - the glory of God. My sins and my sin are cleared away. I have a poor body of humiliation here, but the glory of God is ministered to me by the gospel of the glory.

247 I see the Person who was made sin for us, who bore Himself the wrath of God. He has passed out of it all and is in glory by the work He wrought. He, the Son of God, was there before the world was; but He is there now in virtue of the work He has accomplished, and the testimony that comes forth is this, "The Man that bore all your sins, the Man that Satan did his worst against, is in glory!" These sufferings of Christ are over, and over with God's testimony to their worth. I have His estimate, for He has set Him at His own right hand in glory; and when I get there, I see it "in the face of Jesus Christ." This gives a very distinct character to the ministry and to the position we are in. We are brought by Him to believe in God who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory. There, when I was only in the energy of sinfulness, God has wrought a work by Him so effectual that He who did it is at God's right hand, and now I can see the glory and delight in it. Instead of seeing the glory of God as in Moses, "We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed." Oh, let me see that! The glory is the proof to me that sin is put away.

My sinbearer is in glory. Of course I delight in that. The Holy Ghost comes down because of it, and I am sealed. The Christian stands with the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, looks back at the sufferings of Christ, resting in the efficacy of the accomplished work, and looks forward to the glory. He knows God's acceptance of the accomplishment of the work, and what it leads to, because Christ is in it as a man. It is not only that the man who bore my sins meets me as a poor sinner, but He treats every Christian as Himself. When He revealed Himself to Paul, He said, "Why persecutest thou me?" If Christ owns me as Himself, what am I waiting for? I am waiting for Him to come and take me to Himself, for I have the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, and my title to glory is the Son of God in heaven. If I die, I go to Christ, but I am waiting now for Him to come, and bring me into that which He has given me as mine, for the Holy Ghost is sent down to tell me that it is mine. He being in the glory will have me there. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." He has done the work that saves, He has redeemed me to God and sent down the Holy Ghost; and now I am waiting for Him to come to take me up to be like Himself and with Himself for ever.

248 In the early part of chapter 5 the apostle speaks of the power of life, that has so come down into the place of death, that he can say, I do not want to die or be unclothed - I see a power come in by which I can be changed into the glory without dying at all. Of course he did die; but it is important to see it as a present living power. So he says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." The power of death is broken. If I die, says the apostle, it is all gain. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." My spirit will be with Him, and I shall be raised when the time comes. He brings in this blessed truth: the testimony being of the glory of Christ, and Christ in glory the proof that the work is perfectly accomplished, and He sitting down because it is finished; we being sons of God; and the Holy Ghost come down to dwell in us, and make us understand that our sinbearer is in the glory. The only thing we have to wait for is, that He should come and take us to Himself. We are delivered from this present evil world and we belong to Him.

It is very striking the way in which the Lord speaks to Paul in Acts 26. "I have appeared unto thee to deliver thee from the people [Jews] and from the Gentiles." That is, he was one completely connected with Christ as his life and hope; and, seeing the One that was in glory, he was neither Jew nor Gentile. He belonged to Christ in glory. So do we. Of course we have not had a vision; but what he testified we receive and the gospel has associated us so completely with Christ in glory, that we lead the life of Jesus here. Our forerunner has gone in, and He sends down the Holy Ghost to be the seal of each person in this very position. "He which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God." The establishing was in Christ, and the anointing was with the Holy Ghost, giving Him as the seal upon our persons and the earnest in our hearts. "To them that look for him will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"; that is, He will have nothing more to do with sin, because He came once to put it away - the first time. That work is finished. Those who believe not on Him will die in their sins. "To those who look for him" will He appear with nothing to say to sin: it is a resurrection unto life. "I will come again to receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

249 If I go up before the judgment-seat of Christ, in what state do I go? Why, Christ has come and fetched me! If I think a great deal of any one who is coming to me, I go and meet him at the train myself. This is the way I go up before the judgment-seat of Christ: Christ has had such delight in me that He has fetched me! Another thing is: in what condition do we appear there? "Sown in corruption, raised in glory." We shall be before the judgment-seat of Christ glorified already! Nothing can be simpler. "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body?" Did you ever think of this? It is a very great

blessing. There we shall have the unceasing grace that has followed us and cared for us all the way through, and at last brings us there glorified like Christ. Of course in looking back I see it in measure, but then I shall know even as I am known. Do you simply read the fulness of redemption in that way? Now that my sinbearer is at the right hand of God in glory, what need I fear when I come before Him? I shall bear His image. Blessed thought of God! Therefore we wait for Christ. He is Himself our hope, and we have life in Him.

When a Christian dies, he is "absent from the body, present with the Lord," his spirit goes to Christ: but he is not looking for that, he looks to be conformed to the image of His Son in glory. The whole condition is met there. Christ then sees of the fruit of the travail of His soul, because He has made us perfectly happy and satisfied. He was entirely alone upon the cross for us; it was God dealing with sin. Now His sufferings are over and we are looking at the glory of God. I see Him there - I am here upon the earth. He is sitting on His Father's throne, and we are waiting "not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." He has done the work that makes us individually fit to be together with Him in His glory. That is what makes the coming of the Lord so precious. "Every one that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure." Thus the position of the Christian is distinct - we are standing between the sufferings and the coming of Christ. Soon we shall see Him and be like Him. The hope of the coming of Christ was the first thing lost in the ruin of the church, leading to the practical state of Christendom at present. "If that wicked servant [he is a servant still] say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming." What made him eat and drink with the drunken was his heart's saying, "my Lord delayeth." He did not say He would not come back when the end of the world comes, and He sits upon the great white throne, and earth and heaven flee away - which is not His coming!

250 How is it that saints do not see the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? People wonder that godly men do not see it, though the wise just as much as the foolish virgins went asleep. What then changed the state of things? "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." There is a positive revelation that the thing that wakes them up is the testimony that the Lord is coming. The separation took place then. "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." The wise virgins had oil still in their vessels, but they had given up expecting the Bridegroom, and gone to sleep in some comfortable place. Once in the comforts of the world they slept more or less, and the Lord wakes them up with "Go ye out." Do you think that, if the Lord were to come to-night, you would have bright well-trimmed lamps?

Just one word as to the full effect of the evil of these last days. I must warn you that we are in "perilous times," though they are blessed times for all that. I say it because it is of such moment, now that we are in 2 Timothy times. He speaks of the state of things and says, Where am I to look? It is the Scriptures that direct the Christian, and knowing too of whom they are learnt. "Continue in the things that thou hast learnt and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Then he adds, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith that is in Jesus Christ." If I go and learn of Paul, then it is all right; but if you say, The church teaches, then how am I to know? for you all know how the Scriptures are called in question now, and this is Christendom.

The word of God is a two-edged sword; it has no handle: all is blade. It is the word that judges people, and they cannot judge it. "It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." A man comes to me and tell me about various readings and the like: I reply, How do you like "a man that tells you all things that ever you did?" The word of God does not talk about all sorts of fine bits of learning, but it deals with a man's

conscience. That is the way that the word of God is known. Nathan comes and tells David a beautiful story of a little lamb. "Oh! he deserves to die." You are the very man! Just look at the Samaritan woman. The Lord had been talking to her about wells of water, and never said one word about the rest, till at last comes "Go call thy husband." What is to be done with such a person as she was? "I have no husband." She tells the truth to hide the truth. The instant the conscience is reached, there is intelligence of the word of God.

251 One of the very first things that struck me fifty years ago was that, if the truth is made subject to materialism, this is not having to say to God. When I get into the presence of God, my conscience is there. Faith's roots are in the conscience. The place where the word of God gets is never in the intellect, always in the conscience; and this must be and ought to be, because it is God's word. If I question, it is at once starting a lie in order to know whether God's word is true. When God comes with the point of His sword, He reaches the conscience, and I know very well that the sword has a point. When the Lord, the second Man, goes to meet the whole power of evil, when Satan comes and tempts Him, what is the Lord's sufficient argument? He comes to bind the strong man; what is His weapon? He quotes a text out of the Old Testament, a book that men think so little of now. "It is written." That was sufficient wisdom for the Lord and sufficient answer for the devil. He had not a word to say. The Lord Jesus coming as a man, everything depended on His getting the victory.

When I look at 1 Corinthians 2 I read, "Now we have received not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit that is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." I find "the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God." "What man knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of a man that is in him? "No one knows what is in my heart if I do not tell it. "Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." There are three things. The Spirit unfolds and reveals the things; by words given of the Holy Ghost we communicate them; and by the Holy Ghost too they are received. The word consequently is the resource in the time when people know not what to say about the church.

252 People speak of "apostolic succession." There is no "succession" in the truth. It is such a comfort that what I have is straight from God. The truth is the expression of what is in the blessed heart of God. I have the truth in Christ. Such is the very character of those who walk correctly. You see the blessed testimony of it in Revelation 3: "Because thou hast kept my word and hast not denied my name" An open door He set before them: none could shut it. "Thou hast a little strength." There was not a great deal to say, but what characterised them was what God delighted in, "thou hast kept my word." The name of Christ was valued in the soul, and the word of Christ had its authority for the conscience and was treasured in the heart. He kept the heart in grace. He tells them, "Behold, I come quickly." He is waiting till His enemies are made His footstool, and meanwhile He is sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God. He is set down with His Father on His throne. What about His friends? They are waiting for Him to come and receive them unto Himself. The power of evil He will set aside, He will come out of heaven.

Christ does not take the inheritance alone; all things are to be gathered together in one, and He Head over all. In Philippians 2, when speaking of subjection, we hear, "of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth"; but when of reconciliation, "of things in earth and things in heaven" only; Col. 1:20. But there is a bride - we are like Eve, who was the spouse, the helpmeet, for Adam in the creation he was lord of: she was associated with him who was lord. "Christ is given to be head over all things." It is not only that Christ is Lord of all things, but there is a holy bride made ready, the Lamb's wife.

What I desire is that your souls may see that the accomplished work of Christ has set Him in the glory. Then the Holy Ghost having come gives us the consciousness of this, and puts us into association with

the glory that is coming. It shews us that our place is where Christ is then there is the patience of Christ." "Thou hast kept the word of my patience." He says, I am expecting that day. If I wait for the glory, I know that He is waiting for it too. Then, when we do go before the judgment-seat of Christ, we go there glorified.

253 We are passing through this world, and we have this treasure in earthen vessels. I turn now to the practical effect of it. How are we to walk according to the power of the grace He has put us into? We are poor feeble ones, yet Christ's members, and through this revelation we know we are to walk in this world according to the power and grace of Christ. We have seen what the ministry we have received is. There is no veil at all; there was a veil before, "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest"; but now we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Christianity is the unveiled glory of God. It is the wonderful and blessed truth that there is no veil; the glory of God is unveiled, but it is in the face of Jesus Christ. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. The veil may be on a man's heart, but there is no veil on the glory. That was the case with the Jew - the Jew might spit on Christ's face. We are all lost in our natural state; but if this remains hid, there is nothing to go back to, nothing remains but fiery indignation.

Then you come to the men who have received the truth. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts." It is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. The full glory is revealed; that glory thus given shone in our hearts by the power of the Spirit of God, and I come to the person who exhibits it. "In the face of Jesus Christ." "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." I have the fulness of the gospel - the gospel of the glory of Christ, for this is the full force of the word. The only thing to wait for is the coming of the Lord to make it good to us.

Now we come to the walk meanwhile. Grace has brought me salvation, and I am looking to the glory to put me into the full result. I know Christ is there in the glory of God. I know the righteousness of God and where that righteousness brings me. But "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." "Troubled on every side [that is the vessel], yet not distressed [God is there]; perplexed, but not in despair [God is there]; persecuted [that is the vessel], but not forsaken [God is there]; cast down [that is the poor vessel], but not destroyed." What God has done is to take all this perfect salvation, this glory of His Son, this treasure, and put it all in a poor earthen vessel that feels all the difficulties and trials of the way, but has the grace of Christ.

254 So the more of the glory Paul had, a great deal the more he had of trial; he despaired of his life. "I had the sentence of death in myself." Why so? "That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." He was there in despair of his life, so what is bringing death to a dead man? He held himself really to be dead to the world, he had the treasure in an earthen vessel. God was with him in the vessel's weakness. There I find the Christian's path. The salvation is complete, our sinbearer is in the glory. Paul had this treasure in an earthen vessel; he held himself to be dead to sin and everything, though he was not insensible to the trial, yet God was in it; and there he learns that the treasure is not here but there, and that there is no possessed power, but a possessed treasure in a dependent man. The treasure is never touched, and I learn continual dependence. If it is even an apostle, the vessel of the treasure must be a dependent man; and that is how we must walk. When you come to giving out the light of testimony or anything else, the treasure must be there or you have nothing; and the vessel must be nothing, or else you get treasure in the flesh. If I am alive as to the flesh and let it act, it spoils the treasure; if the lantern is not clean, the light will not shine out. I have Christ revealed in my soul; but if flesh comes in, it spoils the

testimony.

Every Christian gets the sentence of death on the old man. "Reckon yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The old man was crucified with Christ, but all the treasure of the glory of God is in this vessel. If I am not to spoil it, I must hold myself a dead man. If I reckon myself dead, and a man comes and asks me to amuse myself, why, I say, I am dead! I have lit the light in the lantern. if the lantern is perfectly clear, it will shine out. I must have my body and my flesh kept down. I have a glorified Christ; I have the Christ revealed in my soul. The flesh is in me; but it is my privilege for my own sake as for His to give it no place. I say I am not a debtor to the flesh to live after the flesh; I reckon myself dead. Before God a Christian stands only a new man, "crucified together with him"; Christ lives in me. Suppose temptation or persecution comes, I quietly reckon myself dead: if I do not, I am frightened at all sorts of things. I am not afraid of my own reputation. "I have the sentence of death in myself that I should not trust in myself, but in God that raiseth the dead." He takes up "Christ in me": he says, "always bearing about in the body," etc.: he was associated with Christ. Christ has really died for us on the cross; so Paul takes up death in Christ practically and says, "always bearing about in my body," etc. He realised his place. That is, I reduce it to practice, and learn that flesh is flesh and must not stir; and if I am full of Christ, it will not. The flesh is not one atom changed, but I am not following it.

255 The first thing Noah does after God had blessed him is to get drunk. Aaron's sons at the beginning offer strange fire! Christ - man crucifies! If Paul is taken up to the third heaven, the flesh will be puffed up about it. If it be under the power of the cross in death, that will do - "Always bearing about." If a Christian is full of Christ, he is not distracted by the things that the devil puts before him. Suppose a mother heard that her child was run over at the other end of the town, do you think she would look at the fine things in the shops as she went along? No, she would not know that the things were there, she is full of her child. "This one thing I do."

Many of you have sorrows, trials, difficulties. "We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal body." I see you are in earnest, you are carrying about in your body the dying of the Lord Jesus, you must realise it. Paul was in earnest and the Lord comes in and helps him and brings him within an ace of death that he may realise it. That is His way with us if we are in earnest too. If there is any tendency in the flesh to spring up, put the red hot iron on it. "Death worketh in us." Christ's death so wrought in Paul that nothing but life wrought from him in the Corinthians: that is testimony. That is, there should be such truth of death in us that nothing but the life of Christ should be seen from us. I see a man entirely superior to circumstances. This death I have been brought close to was nothing to me. He can say, "God which raiseth the dead." "When we were evil entreated at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak the gospel of God with much contention." It is complete superiority to circumstances. There were the stones flying around Stephen and killing him; yet "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Jesus said, "Father, forgive them." Stephen is the copy of Christ; in the midst of death he is completely superior to circumstances.

256 Now, mark, this is directed to you. "All things are for your sakes." Do you believe that? Everything. You are so beloved of God: Paul for your sakes, Peter for your sakes, Christ for your sakes, the object of God's delight, the Son, the gift, the glory, all for your sakes. God gave His Son to death - "All to the glory of God by us." Oh, if we only saw it, we should get out of the little narrow path of minding our own things. It would not be subjection to circumstances, the instant that was seen. "Though perplexed, not in despair"; we should be made to feel our powerlessness, what the powerlessness of poor wretched flesh is as a man. "All things are for your sakes . . . for which cause we faint not; for though," etc. You have this

treasure; if God puts you through the circumstance which puts down the entire man, He makes everything work together for good. And remember "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous," no, never for an instant. It is only the outward man perishing.

Beloved friends, this is the place He has given us in the circle of His thoughts. Well, if my outward man perish, it is only that the inward man may be renewed day by day. Look at Israel going through the wilderness; why their clothes did not wax old upon them, nor their foot swell those forty years. The Lord was thinking of the very nap of their coats. They were exceedingly evil and naughty; they would not go up. They feared the people of the land and heard that the cities were very great and walled up to heaven. It is all unbelief. What does it matter about a city being walled ever so high, if the walls fall down when we blow a ram's horn! But the children of Israel would not go up, so God says, If you will not go up, you must stay in the wilderness, and He turns back with them! There is His faithfulness to be leaned upon. "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous." The inward man is renewed day by day.

We get difficulties: still God's eye is upon us; but I never could spend one instant fearing them, if my heart would only recollect, when I know not how to meet them, that the power of God has been in exercise to lead me through the trial and everything, and His eye is upon me. If we only could remember it! "Our light affliction which is but for a moment," etc. I may have to be afraid of my life: no matter, it only touches my outward life. Everything that kept the flesh down, in a certain sense, he has reward for: verse 17 is the effect. The glory had been put into an earthen vessel, and the vessel has been dealt with in death, and now it is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If testimony, it is through this process. "Our light affliction worketh for us . . . the things seen are temporal." The mind is all fixed on that which is eternal. He is breaking down the vessel, and soon he will have the glory, and then there will be no vessel seen at all. Now there is the Christian!

257 But as referring back to the old ministry, there are three things it cannot do. It does not give life; it does not give strength: and what is more, it does not give an object. No object is presented by law to my soul. I may believe in God - all right. But I have Christ - well, I have life; but I am a poor weak creature in myself - well, I have strength (by the Holy Ghost); and what is more, I have an object in Christ. It is a totally altered state and condition. Christ is always thinking of me. He is a living Person; and I have grace sufficient for me - a strength needed, and He will help me in my circumstances on the way to death; and more, I am going to be with Him and like Him for ever in glory. This is Christian standing. Then Paul is brought into the experience of what the poor earthen vessel is. He is learning to reckon it dead every day by having an earthen vessel; if it meddles, it mars the testimony. The power is not in the vessel at all, and, if it acted, it brought something that broke down the flesh. I have the blessed word of God revealed in simple purity and kept in the heart of him that receives it. "Always bearing about in the body": that is where growth is, the sense that all the glory revealed to us is His.

We have heard some of our brethren speak of having knowledge. I must get to know the thing. It is not insincerity; but flesh and blood cannot understand it. "Flesh and blood have not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven"; still, "blessed art thou." But in the same chapter the Lord has to say to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." There is no question that it was real. God had revealed it to him: "upon this rock I will build my church." If He was going to build His church, He must die, and therefore He began to shew unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem and be killed and raised again the third day. "This be far from thee," Peter said. Though there be a blessed revelation of God, it does not follow that the flesh is practically broken down in the measure of the truth we hold; but it is not insincerity. If I have the glory there, it is what suits it here. The flesh does not like the cross, and if the flesh is not broken down to

the measure of the revelation, it must be treated as Satan. There is the practical Christian, placed between the sufferings and the glories; the presence of the Holy Ghost in him reveals the glory of God. Instead of being a terror to me, He reveals all that glory and Christ in it - my delight. Satan's power over me, sin and death, are all gone; and what I wait for now is that I may be with Him forever. Meanwhile He has said, "I am glorified in them."

258 Now let me ask you, can you say that you so see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ that salvation is settled for you? That you are set down in the very glory which to Moses could not but be a terror, but is now the proof of salvation? Is that what the glory of the Man who is in glory has done for you? Can you say, with your heart filled with the Holy Ghost, Well, I have done with the world, I am waiting for God's Son from heaven - the Man who has got the victory, to come and take me to Himself? I am like a person here in a poor place, I have sent on all my furniture and everything before me, I am only waiting to be taken into the place prepared: nothing detains me here. Have you been bearing about in your body the dying of the Lord Jesus? Have you seen what this wretched flesh is that you are to be practically delivered from? And it is infinite goodness to put this treasure in an earthen vessel which, if it stirs, spoils the whole thing. If I look at my place and standing before God in Christ, I say, I am not a child of Adam at all, I am a child of God. Beloved friends, are your souls really believing what Christ has done, and that He is in the glory because of it, and that you are saved by the finished work His Father gave Him to do?

There is no uncertainty about Christ at all. "Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him." Do you see that, when you stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, you stand there glorified? Has not Paul been with Christ these eighteen hundred years? Do you think God is going to take him out to judge him? There I stand with Christ, my sinbearer: the blessed One who put away my sin and accomplished righteousness is in the glory. I have a full and only hope that this blessed Jesus at a time known to God will come again and receive me to Himself, "that where I am, there ye may be also." Then I shall be like Him and with Him where He is. And by faith we know this now: the word of God has told it us. And what I have by the word of God and by the power of the Holy Ghost in me is certain.

259 The Lord give you, if you have not known it, to receive it now, that you may have the stony places broken down, and that the word of God may find an entrance and give you light that you may understand the wisdom of God and see Him who died upon the cross! He has finished everything and is coming again to satisfy His own love; then "he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" in seeing us in the same glory as Himself. May He give us now to bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-nelson-darby/the-two-ministries-2-corinthians-4-and-5/>

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