



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

2 Corinthians 4: 1-6

Spring 2025

"Country of the Blind"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. We are beginning this morning 2 Corinthians, chapter 4. We'll look at the first six verses. I think we had a great hymn, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, as a good introduction to this passage of Scripture because it speaks of, 'the wiles of the devil', in that text.

But the overriding theme is, *the sufficiency of God*...He is a mighty fortress; He is an absolutely sovereign God.

And that's the reason the apostle Paul can begin the chapter the way he does. He writes,

**4** Therefore, since we have this ministry, (*which he's just described in chapter 3*), as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, (*We don't tremble before the devil and all of the responsibilities that we face in the world and the trials we go through—and Paul will speak of that.*), <sup>2</sup> but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus'

sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4: 1-6

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it.  
Let's pray.

Father, what a privilege it is, as it is every Sunday, to be with Your people and open the Scriptures and read a text of Your inerrant Word. And we come to a great text of Scripture this morning, and we pray You'd richly bless us. We wonder, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Who is sufficient to unfold the truth and the glory of a text like this, and who is sufficient to comprehend it and apply it to one's life sufficiently?

None of us is.—But You are, and so we look to You to enable the truth of this text to come out clearly in the presentation of it, in the sermon itself, and for all to understand it and apply it. May, in other words, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, be active in us and bless us and build us up in the faith, and give us a glimpse of Your greatness in all of this. Give us a glimpse of the glory that we have been hearing of from the apostle Paul in this book—and sanctify us, and change us, and transform us into the image of Christ. That's why we're here. That's why we need to be here.

We're also here because this is a great privilege just to, as a church, enter into Your throne room of grace, and come before Your throne with our petitions, and seek help in time of need. It's our priestly service, and You've made each of us a priest. So we do pray for those who sought our prayers; we look to You to bless in whatever way is good. We can't predict what You have for us, other than to predict it will be for our good—and that's true. And so I pray that You would encourage all with that, and all of us, regardless of our condition. We pray Your blessing upon us; every breath of life we take comes from You; we live and move and exist in You; every moment is a gift from You. Bless this moment, Father. Build us up in the faith. Enrich our faith through our time of

study together, and a time of worship. May it be one—worship and study together. May You be glorified in our hearts. We pray that in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) H. G. Wells' short story, *The Country of the Blind*, is about an explorer in the Andes mountains named Nuñez, who tumbled into a remote valley from which it seemed there was no escape. It was the home of 15 generations of blind villagers who were so adapted to their blindness that they couldn't imagine the concept of sight. When Nuñez tried to explain it to them, they thought he was insane. To cure him, they proposed removing his eyes. But at sunrise, the day of the operation, while all slept, he escaped.

That's our story, for we live in that valley. The world is, *'the country of the blind'*, and it thinks the Christian is insane because he talks about things it cannot understand and believe. That's how Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians chapter 4; and he gives the reason for the world's condition in verse 4; "...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving..."

So, the Christian life is difficult. We're to be 'Light to the world'; that's our calling. But the unbelieving world cannot see the Light. The world even hates the Light, and it thinks that we're insane. So our calling is something like *'Mission Impossible'* ...and that could be discouraging.

It wasn't discouraging for Paul, though. He understood better than anyone, the opposition and difficulty of the ministry—but he began chapter 4 with the encouraging statement, "We do not lose heart."

He had just described his ministry in chapter 3, (the Christian's ministry), as one that gives *life* and *righteousness* and *liberty* and *glory* ... (with great stress on that word "*glory*"). It's the only cure for spiritual blindness. "...we have this ministry..." he wrote, (vs1). 'We have the cure': God has entrusted it to the church—what a privilege that is! *And* it is effective.

God enlightens men—that's the lesson here. Paul wrote, in verse 6 that, 'He shines His Light into men's hearts.' The enemy blinds people's spiritual sight...God makes people see; that's why Paul didn't lose heart.

God is sovereign. We sang about that in our first hymn: He's "a mighty fortress". Why lose heart? God's in control. God is absolutely sovereign, but He works His great ministry through His saints...through His weak saints. That's the ministry we have, and it's all a gift to us.

Paul wrote, "...we received mercy..." (vs1), (that is, 'help to the helpless'). So this is not a boast by the apostle Paul—he was both undeserving and unable. But God has given us a part in His ministry of giving sight to the blind. Knowing that, gives strong motivation for service. And Paul was committed to it, and did it with purity and openness, in contrast to those who don't, (the false teachers).

They are everywhere; and they were in Corinth at this time. In fact, as you follow Paul's ministry, and his letters as well, (by reading the Book of Acts and then reading the letters like Galatians), you realize wherever Paul went, the false teachers went as well. 'He, (*Paul*), left...they filled the vacuum', we could call it that. And here they were in Corinth.

And many of them were in Corinth. As I've said many times, 'We'll look at them in more detail later in the book', but they're there in Corinth. And that's the meaning of this first part of verse 2, "...but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God..." The idea is, 'The false teachers had not renounced that.' They probably accused the apostle Paul of this; of "walking in craftiness" —but they were the ones who were crafty.

That's a trait of Satan. That's what we sang, "his craft and power are great"; and of course, we read that all through the Bible. Genesis 3, verse 1, "The serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field..." He used deceit to *entice* Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. He cast *doubt* on God's Word. He knows God's Word; he used it, you'll

remember, in the temptation of Christ, out in the wilderness. Three times he tempts Him with the Scripture; he twists the Scripture to use it to his advantage. He is crafty; "his craft and power are great".

He has his ministry.—And he has his ministers. In chapter 11, Paul will identify them—and in principle, *declare* all false teachers as servants of Satan. And he, (Paul), says of Satan, (*in chapter 11, verse 14*), "....Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." ...and so do his ministers as well. They follow that pattern. They appear to be enlightened—but it is a lie; they adulterate the Word of God.

Men do that today in various ways—via the use of theological language or biblical terms...but they give them new meanings. And they refer to 'Christ', (and refer to Him very highly), but he's not, 'the Christ of the Bible'. Rather he's, 'the great teacher', 'the great example'...but falls short of being, 'the very Son of God.' So, they speak in this way; they use various terms, and they seem to be speaking the truth...but their teaching something very different from the doctrines of the apostle.

And these men in Corinth were corrupting, adulterating the Gospel in much the same way. They were men 'of the Law', *Judaizers*, who marginalized the work of Christ and emphasized 'the work of man'—and 'the work of man' was found in keeping the Law. They would have objected to Paul's statement in Romans 10, verse 4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

Judaizers preached Christ too. It's part of the deception of the error; they preached Christ, but not 'the all-sufficient Savior'. Faith alone in Him was not enough; it had to be combined with law-keeping, with ceremonies. It had to be combined with circumcision...that was essential. Today it would be *baptism*—or other rules, other ceremonies. The Lord's Supper, for example, (the Mass). Craftiness, duplicity, is the method of false teachers. They use the right words, but they fill them with error...and it is deadly. Crafty and deadly.

Paul's ministry was not like that. Earlier he said, "We use great boldness in our speech." (2 Cor 3:12). 'We speak clearly, we speak openly as we speak the Gospel.'

And here he restates that by saying that he and the others with him conducted themselves "in the sight of God." (vs2b). Which means they ministered honestly; they ministered with pure motive.

Paul knew that God saw everything that he did; for God knows the heart of every individual, and knew the heart of the apostle Paul. He knew all that Paul was thinking, all that he was doing. And Paul knew that the life that he was living would be a life that he would give an account for before the LORD. And he was ready to do that. He lived without shame before God. He was open and honest before God and men, and 'manifested the truth', he said. (vs2c).

He gave the "unadulterated", (ibid.), pure truth of God in the Gospel 'of grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.' He didn't need to resort to subterfuge/deceit, in order to win converts. God's Word wins converts; it has self-authenticating power so that it affects the conscience of those who hear—and it wins them. It convicts them, or 'It wins them'.

It always does its work. That's the promise that Isaiah gave in Isaiah 55, verse 11: 'It goes forth, and it will never return to the LORD empty, without having its intended effect.' It is powerful. The Word of God is unique. It's not like any other word; it has great power. —It is 'the sword of the Spirit.' (Heb 4:12).

Now, with that kind of conviction and confidence, a person will be open and honest in his, or her, life and ministry—which a Christian must be. Paul was; he spoke truth and he did not lose heart. But it is to my mind, (and I'm sure to yours as well), a remarkable fact that a person can present the Gospel, (as Paul did), with complete clarity, and conviction, and real love and concern for the individual to whom it is being presented...and men still don't get it and won't believe.

The false teachers may have called attention to that as proof that Paul's Gospel was deficient and that his ministry was ineffective. Many in Corinth had not been persuaded. The synagogue had rejected it...and Paul acknowledged that in verse 3. But the fault is not in the Gospel, (or those who give the Gospel), it's in those who fail to

perceive it as the truth. Verse 3, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing..." When the Gospel is given it is hidden to those who have, 'a veil over their own hearts', (as Paul said in chapter 3, (vs15). They, "are perishing", (vs3), and will be forever lost if they do not believe.

That's the natural man, though; a veil is over his or her heart—Jew and Gentile alike. It's the Jew that he speaks of specifically in chapter 3, but it's true of all who are in unbelief. So faith is essential. A lack of faith is proof of spiritual death—just as failure to see light is proof blindness. The sun doesn't stop being the sun because the clouds block the view; it doesn't stop shining because a blind man can't see it. The defect is not in the sun, it's in the man. And the glory of the Gospel isn't less because men don't see it or respond to it. It *is* the truth; it is life—and it is glorious.

One proof that the Gospel is true is the consistency of the message. There are 27 books in the New Testament, written by different men, to different groups, at different times, dealing with different issues...and they are all consistent. The message is the same. Salvation is not of man. It is not of human effort or merit. It is through the one Person, the Lord Jesus Christ—His person and work alone.

That was His statement in John chapter 14, verse 6, that, 'He alone is the way to the Father.' He is "the way, and the truth, and the life..." —The truth, the way, and the life,(eternal life). It's in Him and Him alone.

And Peter made the same point. Acts chapter 4, verse 12; he said, "...there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Only the *name*, the *person*, the work of Jesus Christ will save. And that is consistent with the Old Testament, where the first promise given to fallen man was of a deliverer to come, a redeemer, who is Christ; Genesis 3 verse 15.

It is the same message throughout the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, all 66 books, and it is clear—clear to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. That's the proof of the message—the consistency all through the Bible, over the ages, and over a variety of books.

But there is another power at work among men that accounts for such failure to see the glory of the Gospel and to respond to the Light—and that is the devil. In verse 4 Paul calls him "the god of this world." Now of course, he's not a god in the true sense of the word. He is not holy; he's not eternal; he's not omnipotent or omniscient or omnipresent; he's not eternal—he's limited. He is a creature...and he's doomed. He is a god in the sense given in Psalm 96, verse 5, "All the gods of the people are idols...", (which really means 'are *nothingness*'), "...But the LORD", the psalmist continues, "made the heavens."

The LORD is the creator of all, and sovereign over all. Satan's not sovereign. In John chapter 12, verse 31, Jesus does call him, "the ruler of this world." He has real influence over the lost, and fabricates the zeitgeist, (he's the author of 'the spirit of the age', whatever that may be), and it changes from age to age.

But he's clever and he's got a new 'Spirit of the Age', which is always attractive, very attractive, to people. So, in that people are led by him and surrender to his influence, they worship him. He is their god and ruler, who holds sway over them without them even knowing it. People don't worship him as 'the devil'. (Now there are some exceptions to that; they're odd; they're on the extreme, and they are fringe groups.) But generally, men follow the ideas they think are true—but aren't. They worship gods, (idols), that they believe are god, but really aren't. They worship the lie because they believe it is the truth and are convinced of it: Materialists, who reverence the cosmos, the universe, believing that it is all there is, or was, or ever will be, *is one example*.

That's how Satan maintains control over the human race—by deception. He has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the Light of the Gospel and the glory of Christ. He is a master at that. The devil is clever, crafty; he knows how to win an argument and persuade people. That's how he blinds people. He convinces them that he's right.



Men are not forced against their will to follow him. We are all free moral agents. Now I'm not saying man has free will; man's will is in bondage to sin; but in that bondage he acts freely...gladly! Under deception or selfishness, whatever is the motivation, (according to this, in this context, *deception*), men act freely—they act according to their nature. And that nature is fallen, but within that, they act freely. They are not forced to follow Satan.

And Satan is a student of this human nature, (which we all have), and he knows man's weaknesses; and he entices man through them, through their pride or their ambition, through people's lusts or passion—whatever it may be, (it's different with different people), but he uses all of these to influence individuals. So the unbelieving are easily persuaded, and follow Satan's lies.

The whole world does, which shows how effective the evil one is—and how dangerous this world is. It's full of temptation, full of deception because he is 'the crafty one' that has such influence. This is what Satan is devoted to doing—*deceiving*, hiding the truth, keeping people from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ. He has lots of wiles; he has lots of tricks. But I would suggest there are basically two ways he deceives people. It's pretty basic I think, but two ways: By making the truth appear false—and making error appear true.

It's an old tactic: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil...", (Isaiah chapter 5, verse 20). That's what the prophet Isaiah was dealing with...and it's the same things we deal with. People are calling evil things 'good' and good things 'evil', and that's the devil—that's Satan. He is the master of that—of obscuring the glory of Christ, and making Him appear to the world as inglorious.

The English poet, Charles Swinburne, called Christ, "the pale Galilean", and accused Him of causing, "the world to grow gray." That's the image of Christ that Satan wants the world to have of Him—of a joyless person who robs us of joy, takes all the fun out of life. He, (*Satan*), has promoted that...and some churches, I must say, have assisted

him by their legalistic focus on rules and taboos—rather than on Christ and on His person, His work, His goodness, His grace, and our liberty in Him.

As a result, the world cannot see the true Christ, whom Paul describes here as, He, “who is the image of God.” (vs4c). In other words, ‘very God of very God, the, ‘eternal Son of God, eternally generated by the Father.’ He's not “pale”; He's bright. He is Light and life; He loves the lost; He cares for those who have stumbled and fallen; He gives help to those in need. His first miracle, in John chapter 2, is called, “Joy in Cana”, because He rescued some newlyweds from social disgrace, (and probably crushing debt), by creating new wine when the old wine gave out at their party. —He gave joy to them.

He entered the homes of peasants and He shared in their poverty. He received sinners and outcasts; He ate with them, He didn't look down on them. He is the one who put His hands on lepers, touched the unclean, the diseased, to heal them. He cast out demons and opposed evil. He wept over the dead, and He raised them to life. A man has to be blind!—Blind to look at all of that and think Christ made life dreary and colorless. He alone makes it bright, and happy, and beautiful, and worth living.

Now, it is true He takes ‘the fun out of life’ when ‘fun’ is the *world's* idea of it: Hedonism. Drunkenness. Immorality. Selfishness. Self-destructive behavior. He takes away everything that debases the image of God, and is wrong; and replaces it with righteousness, a whole and healthy life: Holiness, love, joy, peace—all of the fruit of the Spirit. He replaces the bad with the good. He is the life giving God who blesses all who come to Him through faith; not by hard labor or painful efforts to gain divine favor, but by faith alone , by *receiving* the gift of life.

Now there are difficult paths to Him that people have made for themselves. I think of Luther and what he put himself through as a monk in order to gain God's favor before he came to understand *justification by faith*. And the Wesleys as well, and Whitefield and their ‘holy club’, in which they fasted and put themselves through all

kinds of rigor, in order to gain God's favor. But it was through all of that they came to realize they couldn't, (*gain God's favor*). In fact, Whitefield almost died from the efforts. They realized: 'No, you simply receive it as a free gift by *faith*—and *faith alone*.'

'And that is what we preach', Paul says in verse 5, "For we do not preach ourselves", 'but Christ in His glory.' That's the best way to overcome error...preaching truth—dispelling the darkness with light. That's the way to confront Satan.

And it's the way our Lord did when He was tempted in the wilderness. Three quotations for three temptations, all from the Book of Deuteronomy. And that's how we confront Satan. He's persuasive, and he's powerful, but the Lord frees men from his power through the truth of the Gospel of the crucified and risen Savior. So Paul says, 'That's what we preach!' "We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord." F. F. Bruce wrote, "The herald does not draw attention to himself or devise his own proclamation. He's a man on a mission; he proclaims the message that the king gave him to announce. —And a preacher does the same." (Or the Christian, out in the community in the market place, 'Does the same.')

The message is not about the preacher, or the evangelist—or whatever subject may interest the preacher. No, it's the message God has given him...and it is simple...and it is, "Christ Jesus as Lord!"

'He's the eternal Son of God who is our Savior. It is Jesus Christ, the God-man who rescued sinners who are perishing by dying in their place as a sacrifice, (and the only sacrifice that God accepts...and has accepted). He's "the suffering Servant", but He is now alive: Crucified, resurrected, glorified, and seated at the Father's right hand; and all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him.'

Paul never strayed from that. In fact, Paul says, we are, "your bond-servants for Jesus' sake." (vs5b). Paul was a minister, he was not a master. Christ is the master, and Paul followed His mission and message. The mission is not easy...but it's not complicated. It is, "Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season." (2Tim 4:2).

‘Always preach the Word!’, he told Timothy, regardless of what the reception is going to be like. ‘Never stop preaching the Word!’; that's our mission. Don't worry about self; be faithful to God's Word; He will be faithful to you. And that's what Paul did. He didn't worry about himself; he ministered to others. He was a servant—literally, ‘a slave for Christ and His people’, to enlighten them and bring the message of life to the lost.

Satan's mission is to prevent that. In the future, according to Revelation 20, verses 1 through 3, ‘He will be bound with a chain and thrown into a deep pit, a bottomless pit, so that he can no longer’, as John wrote, "deceive the nations."

Well obviously, that's not yet happened, so the deception continues. He has blinded the minds of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and they are convinced, implacable, as devoted to the lie as Paul was to the Gospel. It seems hopeless—‘Mission Impossible’!

But the lie cannot prevail, not when the Word is proclaimed because it is the message of ‘power and light.’ That's why Paul preached it. That's why Paul preached the main theme of it: ‘The Lord Jesus Christ.’ That is the true message of salvation; the only message God blesses, and the only way people can be delivered from Satan's power and deception. The Word of God is effective, sufficient...more than sufficient. And again, that's the reason Paul began the chapter saying, "We do not lose heart." And it's the reason he gave in verse 6 for preaching Christ only. The Gospel, the Word of God prevailed over deception. His Light prevailed over all darkness, to enlighten the blind so that they see the glory of Christ, and they receive Him as the Savior.

What man cannot do for himself, what man doesn't even want to do for himself, God does powerfully. And Paul demonstrated that from the earliest passage in the Bible; Genesis chapter 1, when God created light. "In the beginning", the world was in chaos, in deep darkness...a fact, (and also a helpful metaphor to describe the unbelieving world). Verse 3, “Then God said, ‘Let there be light, and there was light.’ ” The world

didn't work together with God to bring this about—to change its situation and its condition, put itself in order. It was just there, “formless and void”, covered over in darkness...a lifeless thing. God alone willed to change that; He spoke light into existence and dispelled the darkness. It's all of God.

There's a theological term that is a good word to know, '*monergism*'. It is from two Greek words, kind of like *metamorphoō*. [He's laughing; he made fun of me last Monday. I can say the word, *metamorphoō*, which is made up of two Greek words, *meta* and *morphé*...'*after form*', or '*the form that comes after*'. If you were here last week you know what I'm talking about.] But this word, *monergism*, is the combination of the Greek word *mónos*, (alone), and *ergon*, (work). It's, '*the single work of God*.' —That's salvation. It is God's work alone.

And Paul saw an analogy between the way God worked in the original creation, (the material creation), and how He works in the spiritual creation. He, (*Paul*), was brilliant about this; he could make a connection between an historical event and our spiritual condition—and the reality of us, spiritually.

But it's clear, it's God's work from start to finish. "For," he wrote, "God who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness', is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." (vs6). Just as God spoke literal Light into the primordial night and scattered the darkness that filled the cosmos, so too, He speaks spiritual Light into men's hearts that are darkened with unbelief. He enlightens men's minds; He gives them knowledge of the truth—that's what "Light" represents.

And as a result, people see. They see the truth, they see the reality of, "...the glory of God in the face of Christ." (ibid.). They see Christ as He truly is, as God's eternal Son, and the Savior of men—and they believe. They cannot resist believing because our eyes are open and they see the glory, and they are compelled to believe...they must

believe. That's grace, and what Paul experienced personally. As Philip Hughes put it, "This isn't academic theorizing."

Paul had in mind a vivid picture of what he is describing here, because he literally saw the glory of God in the face of Christ. Luke recorded it in Acts chapter 9; it wasn't a vision he saw. (He did see a vision later in the Book of Acts, (16:9), when he was in Troas and he sees in a dream this man saying, "Come over...and help us.")

But on the Damascus Road, he actually saw Christ—he saw Him in the Light. And, as Luke records it in chapter 9, (and in two other places), Paul was on his way to Damascus. It was noon, when suddenly a bright light flashed all around so that Paul, (then Saul), fell to the ground. He knew he was seeing God because he asked, "Who are You, Lord?" (vs5). It's almost a paradoxical statement; the answer is in the question. It's the Lord that's in the light.

Still, He identified Himself to Paul by name when, "He said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.'..." (vs5b). It was the middle of the day under a bright Syrian sky, and Saul of Tarsus was in deep darkness when God spoke light onto his path, and into his soul—and he saw for the first time, Christ Jesus as Lord.

He saw, "...the glory of God in the face of Christ." (vs6). That's where we see God—in His eternal Son. God dwells in unapproachable light. No man can see Him. We see Him in Christ. And that vision changes us.

It changed Saul the Pharisee. He became a new creature: 'Paul the apostle'. The veil was removed from his heart; and he believed by God's sovereign grace. God gave Light, and Paul received sight. It's always the way it happens—always. "In Your light we see light." That's Psalm 36, verse 9; a very important verse; it tells us where we start. We start with God's Light. If we don't begin with God's Light, we won't see light.

Our presupposition, our beginning place is faith, in the Word of God. We begin believing it is true, and it demonstrates itself as true—and if we don't begin there we'll never have truth. 'In God's light we see light.' 'In His truth we see truth.' It is all of grace, sovereign free grace; He makes the blind to see.

That grace changed Paul. He became a servant of Christ, and a servant of men, carrying the message of light and power to the world. And it's what we're to do, 'in word and deed'—and 'not lose heart'.

At the end of the story, *The Country of the Blind*, the hero Nuñez escaped the valley as the sun was rising. And he is seen climbing the high mountain. He has cuts, he has bruises he's received along the way, but he's happy...that's us. We have eyes to see, and we have escaped the country of the blind. We are free, and we are climbing. We get our bruises along the way, but we're happy with heaven, and glory, as our safe destination.

It's not a Christian story that I've referred to, I've given it that. The irony is, the author of the story, H. G. Wells, is said to have died an atheist—as blind as the people in his story. If so, sadly he did not escape.

What about you? Do you have eyes to see? Has God shined His Light into your heart? Has He dispelled the darkness? Do you have the knowledge of Christ and His glory? If so, Hallelujah! You're saved.

But if not, you're among the blind, you're among the perishing, and indeed in danger of perishing forever. In a later version of that story, 'the valley of the blind' is buried under a landslide. Don't you be overtaken by the judgment to come. It is coming. Flee. Whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Turn to Christ. Believe in Him as Lord, God, and Savior.

*(Closing prayer)* LORD, we do thank You for Your goodness and Your grace to us—and what a glorious vision, by Your grace, You've given to us: "The glory of God in the face of Christ!" Expand that vision; give us more and more knowledge of Him, of who He is: What a great Savior He is; what a great person He is; what a compassionate deliverer He is.

And what a glorious God, the Triune God we have: Help us to develop our knowledge of You and live life in obedience to You, gladly and joyfully.

What a privilege it is that You've given us...You've given us a ministry; You've given us a part in Your great work. May we participate in it; may we live before the world as Christ—may they see Christ in us. May we live as Light in this dark world. We can only do that by Your grace, and we ask for that.

Now the LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace.

In Christ's name, Amen.

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