

Faith and Works LX

The Contemporary and Biblical Contexts

Col. 2:8

Parallels in the Parables

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Introduction

There are a lot of boats in the water. Until they are sunk by a good sized storm, or those who ride in them recognize the meaning of the red sky at morning, who realize that their current mode of being will not be enough to cross the void between the rich man and Lazarus, until that point of humility and willingness to let the law of God reveal our deepest need for Him, it will remain to be seen who has their attention on Christ, and who is working to keep their boats afloat.

Who Speaks for Religious Truth?

One of the problems the true body of Christ faces is institutions built on a consensus of opinion, some religious, some secular, many coming together for strength and unity as traditional structures are shaken by the turmoil of our current age, who see their role in society to be that of deciding what will be the official interpretation of to what extent the Bible has relevance in the areas of philosophy and religion. They often seek to place themselves in a position of authority based on their numbers, and their reliance on the current social consensus on which they base their assertions. They appeal to the current cultural consensus to validate their bid for relevance, and not by speaking on the unchanging authority of the Word of God as revealed in the Bible. And so they seek to be the ones to come for clarity for all those who would seek the meaning of the Bible.

The first step made will always be to invalidate the literal meaning of what is presented in the Bible, and its authority to speak into our lives and culture. To those immersed in the current cultural mindset or paradigm it seems obvious and unnecessary to validate the post modern mindset that agrees that nothing can be finally known, that there is no concept or bases for final truth. Yet it is the unquestioned assumed modern posture towards final truth that is used to invalidate the presentations of absolute truth in the Bible The idea of a fallen creation, a loving God, and a dying savior are foolishness to those beginning with the premise that within themselves lies all the wisdom needed to decide right and wrong. To say that is to locate truth within one's own perception and experience.

Therefore when Jesus says that He alone is the Truth that men need to come to recognize, He is placing the knowledge of who He is diametrically opposed to the increasing trend to place man himself and his own personal experience as the foundation for what is accepted as truth. And those building on the old foundation of sand, not that of the rock of Christ, will not be seeking a light that will expose the hopelessness of their cause and quest to perfect themselves by knowing as God knows, to either bind God in a contractual obligation to perform what is expected,

or even better, to have no longer a need for God, to be able in one's self to be as God by operating on the same knowledge that He has.

For these individuals and societies, the feeling is that all the evidence was not yet in when the prophets and apostles recorded what the Holy Spirit was revealing to them. By adding elements from the current modern context to historic doctrines of faith, those doctrines can then be corrected from their being formed at a time when there was not the advantages of the current perspectives and learning's. In the last days Daniel said (Daniel 12:4), knowledge would increase, presumably, as Jesus said of the end times conditions, even as birth pangs, increasing in frequency and magnitude.

Ecclesiastes 12:12

And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

However, those of the traditional Christian faith believe that God has revealed Himself both in Christ and in the historic records of His work primarily through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, David and the prophets, and finally Jesus. They continue to consistently through history unto the present maintain a dynamic ongoing faith with a living God, yet their understanding of Him is guided by the revelation He has provided in the Bible records of Moses, and the prophets and apostles.

But in non biblical Christian religion and philosophy, there is a movement to decide the correct interpretation of the principles and objects of belief, that it is their role to define themselves what man is to understand concerning physical and spiritual realities. This shaping of our world views is being determined by those who see their role to direct mankind into the next correct stage in his evolution.

And so religious belief becomes not a matter of having faith in the character of God and the objective truth and promises He has made known to mankind. But

instead, in the modern sense, it becomes each individuals finding or creating their own truth in faith.

In this sense, all religious belief is the same, even if the specific doctrines used to express them differ, because all religious knowledge comes from the same source, man himself, and from each mans' own interpretation of his/her individual experience.

Religious belief therefore cannot in the modern sense be defined by an objective true for all definition. For truth itself is manufactured by man from his/her own sense of their experience. Man thus supposes he is the creator of his own light and darkness.

The notion that God has spoken and revealed true truths is not allowed in the new consensus of modern religious opinion, even when sufficient evidence exists to legitimize and validate such truths. The new dogma is quite set in its ways. All truths are true except the one that would be objectively true. Jesus, therefore, can be a way, present in His teachings a truth or some truths, and can provide insights that may be useful to some for living a better life. But the new religious authoritarianism will not allow a Jesus who declares that He alone is the only way, truth and life, and that no one can come into union with the Creator but through Him.

Who Is Listening to What Jesus Has to Say?

In the past century, liberal "theologians", who in fact disavowed any acknowledgment of the possibility of a literal creator of mankind citing in the defense of their philosophical positions the current secular scientific consensus, sought to invalidate literal consideration of the testimony of the writings of the Bible on the bases that there were no correlations in what was known of the historical archeological record.

Yet because these secular theologians influenced their denominations to no longer base their definition of the reasons for their religious understanding and experience on the Bible or a valid personal encounter with God, those denominations became essentially secular institutions using somewhat religious terminology that was understood to be redefined to express an existential faith based on one's own personal perception and experience. And so they laid the foundation for our current post-modern culture which is rapidly sliding back from that slippery slope back into occult paganism.

What goes around, comes around, and today in our modern era, we now have the movement that calls itself the "emergent" church moving philosophically in the same direction as the past liberal denominations, by taking with them those who seek to invalidate the testimony of the Bible, but not on behalf of a no-longer incomplete archeology, but instead, because the underlying assumption of modern man is that it is his own subjective perception of truth that defines truth. Truth does not exist apart from man's own personal experience of truth. This renders a final formal definition of final truth as being subjective and unable to be defined by any single theological or philosophical doctrine or definition.

And unfortunately, those who evaluate Jesus from a secular standpoint, or those who evaluate Him based on their own personal expectations, will both be in a position to be swept along by trends that increasingly emphasize one's own personal experience at the expense of Biblical truth.

Jesus said He was the way, the truth and the life. That on the bases of faith in Him, we could learn, as did Paul, the secret of being content in all circumstances, as our momentary experience was no longer the bases for the foundation for our hope and confidence as we stand before the issues of daily life.

Therefore, any assertion that the Bible reveals objective knowledge of the intentions and character of God through time and history is no longer deemed relevant not because there is no evidence for the fact, but because the fact itself has already been defined to be invalid, regardless of the corroborating evidence.

The testimony of Jesus when He spoke of Himself, and the scriptures He fulfilled in His ministry, testify of the Lamb of God redeeming by His own death and resurrection the lost descendents of the first Adam. Without this Biblical context, the ministry, life, death and resurrection of Jesus as defined by Himself, has no meaning or purpose. Yet Jesus said that in the last days there would be many coming in His name, many false Christ's, and that in the last days there would be a great falling away from the true faith of the Gospel (Luke 18:8; Matthew 24:9-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Did Jesus Speak for Himself?

The current context in which Jesus is found precludes His literally being God with Us, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the only way, truth and life. It is much more modern to assume that Jesus was simply one of the better manifestations of mans religious inclinations, a good example for those who wish the benefits of living by the golden rule. In answering this modern mindset concerning Christ, C.S. Lewis made the following observation:

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

— C.S. Lewis (*Mere Christianity*)

To C.S. Lewis's point, Jesus was not a man who learned how to be good, and then taught those same techniques and practices to others so that they too could make themselves good.

Mark 10:18

So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God."

John 8:58

Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

John 10:30

I and My Father are one.”

Jesus said He had come in fulfillment of all that the law and the prophets said concerning Him, and that not one jot or tittle, not one period or comma would fail from what the Law implied, in other words, what is recorded in the written testimony and records would never change as the context was the recorded history contained in the Bible itself, and not the current political, religious or social trends.

Why We Often Do Not See Him

And this is the problem with attempting to reduce the Gospel of Jesus Christ to merely another process of reciprocity and of having a merely contractual understanding of one's relationship to God. Many times in the Gospels we see where Jesus was asked, "who sinned, this man or his parents?" (John 9:1-3), the man in question being inflected with a disease or ailment, or perhaps an unfortunate mishap of some sort. And Jesus would answer neither, but that the works of God might be manifest.

There are no better or worse sinners. All in the ultimate balance have fallen short of the Glory of God, there is none righteous, not one, and this is because, as the whole history of man delineated in the Bible points out, we are sinners not because we have sinned, but rather, as we learn when truly exposed to the full intensity of God's revealed law, we sin because we are born sinners, by nature children of wrath, vessels of mercy awaiting a salvation the God promised to provide himself as a gift, not a reward, lest any man should boast.

And often times it is those who are complacent and at ease with themselves, who feel they have, by their works and obedience to what they know of the law of God, achieved a measure of self-righteousness, who are the very ones we see in the Gospel accounts who have the hardest hearts, who have not come to that place where they are hungry and thirsty for God's righteousness, they have not come to that place where they recognize their inherent need for God's grace and forgiveness.

It is our natural tendency to remain focused on the same plan to build a dwelling place that will somehow sustain us for eternity, using the finite materials based on the foundation of sand that we inherited from the first Adam. And we block out of our awareness the knowledge of our temporal finite nature, and the death that has reigned from the first Adam until now, and the second death that all will face who are unable to endure the presence of God, who are not in union with Him in the spirit, and are cast away from His presence of light into the outer

darkness of which Jesus often spoke. And in that work, we are soliciting God's help so that we can make a success of it.

Who Is God Calling?

But God did not come to call the righteous. He did not come to show people how to make themselves holy. To those who came to Jesus and asked, "what must I do that I may do the works of God, what must I do that I may achieve eternal life?" Jesus' answer was always the same, to give up on all that we are depending on here, for that is not what will sustain us, we are to believe on the one whom God has sent, the perfect lamb of God, who is to be lifted up even as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent.

True saving faith in Christ is not a mechanism to ensure the supply demanded by a finite temporal existence to avoid passing beyond the veil of this life, rather, it is an anchor that goes beyond the veil of this life and is the assurance of treasures in heaven, an imperishable eternal kingdom in Christ, that we can now in the spirit see and acknowledge and rest in and abide in now, and which will be fully realized when we see Christ at His physical return, and this mortal shall put on immortal, and we shall be fully clothed in His likeness.

For concerning the end times that Jesus, the apostles and prophets spoke of, we see the description of the church of Jesus Christ at that time. For those abiding by faith in Him as members of His body, there will be a need for a commando like evangelism, and a steel like, hardened faith, which is not resting upon the results of religiosity and the current fads of spiritual practices that people will exercise on behalf of tangible temporal goods and services, but rather the last days church will need to be comprised of those who have a vision of eternity who can do all things, content in all circumstances, based upon the hope they are assured is laid up for them in eternity.

Why Does He Only Speak In Parables?

Many times we are confused by the parables of Jesus because we are expecting Him to be answering the questions we are always asking, and usually those questions are amiss. We are asking what must we do to be saved, what must we do to inherit eternal life? We often as Paul said, begin in the spirit, by our natural thinking leads us to try, with our mind set on the flesh, to then be perfected in the flesh.

We ask, we have done all these things in religious service, what else should we do, what other good works should we do? And having done these things, we hope to find ourselves rewarded with eternal life and blessings here and now. We seek what we can do to obligate God, and put Him in a contractual debt to meet our expectations and hopes to avoid death and continue on in our current mode of being for eternity. We do not understand when Jesus speaks of the cross, and the need to be born again, clothed in Him, seated with Him in the at the right hand of the Father.

And many times, once we get to the point where we feel we can achieve those things, based upon our own expertise and skill, and our own mastery of ourselves, in denial of the flesh and perhaps severe treatment of the body, all of which require us to be utterly focused on ourselves, by the way, concentrating on the externals, the white washed walls of our tombs, it is many times when we reach that point that we begin to slip even further along the slope of the fall to where we come to see ourselves as equal with God, based on our ability to meet and achieve His standards on our own.

We then soon become part of that mentality that seeks to be as God, to sustain itself, to know as God knows, to no longer be in death due to the falls separation of man from union with God, but to be able to sustain ourselves because we have become like God. And this is the essence of the fall, and the ultimate end progression of all who deny the truth of the Gospel, who refuse to come to the light

of the knowledge of their need for the gift of salvation that God offers mankind to those who by faith would come once again in union with God through Christ.

Many people think that Jesus' ministry on earth was primarily showing people how to be nice. Nothing could be further from the truth. He came to call sinners to faith in Himself, and based on the immeasurable gift of God's grace in Christ, and the love He shown in offering that gift, so we too, as deserving of wrath, but receiving instead mercy, are to live not to earn eternal life, but to live and treat others as people who have received a great pardon, and who in turn show mercy to their fellow man, a people who have been given such a great gift in the riches and glory in Christ Jesus, who no longer hoard and amass possessions seeking contentment for ourselves in this life based on temporal pleasures, but rather people who freely give what they will not keep for eternity based on the treasure they are assured in heaven.

But concerning the modern attempts to divorce the historical Jesus from the context of the biblical narrative, and recast him in the role of a post - modern life style coach, we must make the following observations concerning how far this removes our understanding of Jesus from what He taught concerning Himself, and which was commonly understood by His contemporaries.

If in the end, God was only looking for sincere people who do their best to live a good life, there was no need for Him to send Jesus to die for the sins of mankind.

If all we really need to do is find the correct things to do to achieve eternal life, than Jesus' death on the cross is pointless.

If we are all really good people who have just forgotten how to act good, Jesus' insistence that we pick up our cross, be born again through faith in Him, is pointless.

If we could perfect ourselves, and all we needed was a little advice or encouragement, or even a bit of a spiritual energy boost to finish the race ourselves, Jesus as the Messiah, the Lamb of God is pointless.

If man can make himself as God, or rediscover his own forgotten or lost godhood through hidden knowledge or revelation, than Jesus as the only Son of God, and who is the only way to the Father, is pointless.

The Gospel of new life offered in Christ is not good news to those who seek to continue perfecting themselves, based on the foundation they inherited from the first Adam. The Gospel is only good news and will satisfy those who truly, having come to the revelation of their own personal need for salvation, hunger and thirst not for their own perfection, but for the righteousness of God.

Was Jesus just another good man, a good teacher? No, He is the Lamb of God. Was He just a man who discovered his own godhood and achieved self enlightenment? No, He was the only begotten Son of God. With that in mind, we should now consider the recorded teachings of Jesus, which were for the most part in parables.

Was Jesus teaching a new religion, new things to do to put God in our debt and make Him answer our requests? Was Jesus teaching that He was just one of us, and that He had found the secret to achieving godhood? Many using their natural thinking, unenlightened by the Holy Spirit, think that the teachings of Jesus in the recorded sermon on the mount, are the new law, perfected and distilled so that we could finally achieve perfection by completing a set of laws that we could manage.

After all, Jesus appears at first glance to always be talking about loving others. We can do that in behavior, but if in our hearts we make the distinction that there are those who are sinners, and those who have achieved righteousness based on their successful completion of the requirements of the law, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God desires truth in the innermost parts.

We must let the light shine in the darkness, by first acknowledging that we are in darkness, so that we can see the great light of the Glory of god in the face of Christ.

The Teachings of Jesus Himself

There are a number of different parables that Jesus taught, and which are recorded in the New Testament writings of the Bible, but most, if not all will serve the purpose of getting across the following points.

1. God views all men as lost, and yet equally as valuable and worth pursuing. But only those found clothed in the likeness of Christ, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will inherit eternal life.

The Dragnet Matthew 13:47-50

The Householder Matthew 13:52

The Lost Sheep Matthew 18:12-14,
Luke 15:3-7

The Wedding Feast Matthew 22:2-14,
Luke 14:16-24

The Lost Coin Luke 15:8-10

The Lost Son Luke 15:11-32

2. Only those who know they are in need of a physician will seek the healing that Jesus offers. He is the only answer to man's fallen condition. He is the only foundation on which we are to build, born again in His life, leaving as dead not only our old way of life, but the foundation of that life, that which was inherited from the first Adam, is to be left crucified with Jesus when He died once for all to sin on the cross.

**A Wise Man Builds on Rock and
a Fool on Sand** Matthew 7:24-27
Luke 6:47-49

The Hidden Treasure Matthew 13:44

The Rich Fool Luke 12:16-21

The Pearl of Great Price	Matthew 13:45-46
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector	Luke 18:9-14
Building a Tower and Making War Luke	Luke 14:25-35

3. Salvation by faith in Christ is a radical departure from religion based on man's ability to earn God's favor or become as God. Followers of Jesus are to guard lest the word of the Gospel be choked by false teaching or the circumstances of life.

New Cloth on and Old Garment	Matthew 9:16 Mark 2:21 Luke 5:36
New Wine in Old Wineskins	Matthew 9:17, Mark 2:22, Luke 5:37,38
The Sower	Matthew 13:3-23 Mark 4:2-20 Luke 8:4-15
The Tares (Weeds)	Matthew 13:24-30
The Leaven	Matthew 13:33 Luke 13:20-21

4. Even pragmatists, crooked accountants, or leaders of armies going up against a superior force, will seek a way to avoid the final penalty of being cast out or judged. There will be a final irrevocable judgment between those whose names are written in heaven, and those, even those who lived religious and/or prosperous lives, who did not have a saving relationship with Christ.

The Wicked Tenants	Matthew 21:33-45 Mark 12:1-12 Luke 20:9-19
Faithful and Wicked Steward	Matthew 24:45-51 Luke 12:42-48
The Shrewd Manager	Luke 16:1-13
The Persistent Widow	Luke 18:1-8
The Minas	Luke 19:11-27

5. Our motivation should be on behalf of the life we will live in eternity in Christ, not continuing on the bases of temporal materialism and circumstances. We are complete in Christ, not by what things we add to our list of possessions in this temporal life.

The Workers in the Vineyard	Matthew 20:1-16
The Watchful Porter	Mark 13:33-37
The Ten Virgins	Matthew 25:1-13
The Rich Man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31

6. The word of salvation, if treated as common, or of no importance, will lose its ability to affect our lives.

The Two Sons

Matthew 21:28-32

The Fig Tree

Matthew 24:32-44

Mark 13:28-32

Luke 21:29-33

The Barren Fig Tree

Luke 13:6-9

7. Those who truly have saving faith in Christ, who realize the gift of God's forgiveness and grace, will show that same love and forgiveness to each other. Our value is no longer based on what we do, or what we can earn by our works, but who we are in Christ, and it is fruit from that relationship, the change of heart in those truly receiving forgiveness in Christ, that is the gold used to build on the new foundation of Christ.

Lamp Under a Basket

Matthew 5:14-16

Mark 4:21-22

Luke 8:16-17

Luke 11:33-36

The Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:31-32

Mark 4:30-32

Luke 13:18-19

The Unforgiving Servant

Matthew 18:23-35

The Lowest Seat

Luke 14:7-11

Unworthy Servants

Luke 17:7-10

The Growing Seed

Mark 4:26-29

The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:30-37

The Creditor and Two Debtors

Luke 7:41-43

The Talents

Matthew 25:14-30

A Friend in Need

Luke 11:5-13

The Faithful and Wise Servant

Luke 12:35-40

It is only those who know they are in darkness who will recognize and turn toward the light. Is this Gospel the good news that man is today seeking? It remains the only question that God has answered with Himself. It remains the most important question whose answer is a matter of spirit, and life.

Dying to self is no longer continuing to attempt to build an eternal dwelling on the old foundation inherited from the first Adam. Those who truly hunger and thirst for God's righteousness are those who have allowed the inner most parts of their being to be illuminated by the sword of the spirit, and after all the flesh has been carved away, by that sword, the word of God's truth, not man's compromised conditional accommodating self serving interpretation of God's law, but the true law which by knowledge there is an increase in the knowledge of sin, of the need for the shedding of the righteous blood of the Lamb of God for the final remission of sins.

And when we are stripped of our confidence in the flesh by the revelation of the inability of our fallen flesh to justify itself from the fallen condition into which it was born, there it stands in the desert, an army of bones waiting for the true life, the breath, the spirit of God, for the spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing. It is truly a harvest ripe for those who would present the word of life (Ezekiel 37:10), the good news of the Gospel of faith in Christ Jesus (John 4:24).

What happens when we lose the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ, when our minds are led astray from the doctrine of Christ by the same deception the devil used on Eve.

If salt loses its saltiness, with what will it be salted? The measure of what we will be able to hear is how we hear. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Today if we hear His voice, we must not harden our hearts.

John 9:41

Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

2 Corinthians 4:6

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:14

Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

There can be truth in a doctrine without the doctrine being the truth of the Gospel, just as there are many good deeds that a person can do, yet not be born again and see the kingdom of God, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

What is our foundation, what have we heard, accepted and rejoiced in the message of the Gospel? How has it changed how we relate to God, see ourselves, and relation to each other? The word planted in good soil will bear fruit. We must not receive the word of God in vain. We must not receive another Gospel that replaces the foundation of Jesus with the foundation of man.

Conclusion

When we step back, and get an overview and the big picture of who Jesus presented Himself to be and what He was teaching His disciples, and we distill that down to its essence, we see that Jesus was neither instituting a new religious set of practices, nor was He teaching men how to achieve spiritual enlightenment or power. He was simple and consistently pointing men to Himself, claiming He was legitimately the anointed one that the law and the prophets had been anticipating through the centuries. That He in fact was the fulfillment of all God had promised from the beginning at the fall of the first Adam, to restore God's creation to be once again have the opportunity to be in fellowship and union with Him, through God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the last Adam.

To the women at the well in Samaria, Jesus said that the time had come to no longer rely on man's natural inclinations towards religious practices and belief, that the time had come when God would seek those who would worship Him in spirit and in truth.

When we allow the truth of God, His law, righteousness and love to shine into our hearts, and we acknowledge our need for salvation, through the inability of our own flesh by the works of the law to justify itself, we then come into a position where we can hear and are ready to receive in our hearts the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ who becomes our righteousness.

This is a willingness, and humility of man on his part, and the revelation of God both in the spoken word and what He reveals in receptive hearts by His spirit, that come together for authentic faith in Christ, that faith that Jesus said He would look to find on His return to Earth.

This is not a faith based on good feelings, or a faith that is validated simply because of the temporal results we see with our physical senses, although Jesus did say that those who sought first His kingdom and righteousness would then have God supply all their daily needs, the things the gentiles normally seek after.

"I didn't go to religion to make me happy. I always knew a bottle of Port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity."

— C.S. Lewis

Those who hunger and thirst for God's righteousness and seek first His kingdom will see God provide all their temporal needs. But it is that seeking first of His kingdom as our motivation, that selling all that we have, letting go of it so that we may hold that complete gift God offers in His Son, the treasure hidden in the field, that was of upmost importance.

The Christian believer walking by faith resting and being content with the knowledge of the glory to be revealed at His coming, that anchor that was not to be resting on the circumstances and things of this world, but which was to be placed beyond the veil of this temporal life, firm on the foundation of Christ, seated at the right hand of the Father that would be the bases for true Biblical faith in Christ.

Ephesians 5:14

Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

2 Corinthians 4:6

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

It is the light of the revelation of the Glory of God in the face of Christ that illumines our hearts when we believe receive and put our complete hope and trust in the good news of life in Christ Jesus.

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