

Series: Psalms  
Title: The Light of Thy Countenance  
Text: Psalm 4: 6  
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The faith of faith, the hope of hope, and the love of love is the Light of the Lord's Countenance.

Every believer has Light having been born again of the Spirit of God. But there are certain seasons in which God shows more than at other times, that we cannot restrain the power of sin. As much as we desire it to be otherwise, we find sin reigning over our minds, our will and our works. We strive and wrestle all we can, but still we find that we have no power to overcome. Our own fleshly will, together with the will of all the men in this world, cannot produce what God produces by the Light of his Countenance.

It is in these times that the weight of sin presses us into the dust. We fall down crying out, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us."

What is the Light of the Lord's Countenance? (Ps 80) Here we see some of what it is.

Psalm 80: 1: «To the chief Musician upon Shoshannimeduth, A Psalm of Asaph.» Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. 2: Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us. 3: Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved....6: Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves. 7: Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.... 18: So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. 19: Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

## **I. THE LIGHT OF THE LORD'S COUNTEANCE REVEALS TO THE BELIEVER THE IMAGE WE REALLY ARE.**

**Illustration:** The big magnifying mirror. It reflects our image with all our imperfections, our unholiness, our sinfulness.

When God shines the light of his countenance we behold NOT our own sinful image shining back but we behold the face of Christ, the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3: If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost; 4: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Corinthians 4: 6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

We see ourselves how we really are in God's sight when we see Christ as he is.

1 John 4: 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

We behold the smile put on the face of God by the glorious perfections of his Son our Redeemer. The power of God's glory is in this Light of his countenance. Christ's atoning blood is communicated into our hearts.

We see the smile of God toward us because Christ glorified the Father for us and put away our sin by the sacrifice of himself. We see Christ our Substitute, our Righteousness.

## **II. THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE MAKES NEW, REVIVIES, REFRESHES OUR INNER MAN.**

2 Corinthians 3: 18: But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We come to the mirror ugly in our sin, downcast, but having his light, seeing the face of Christ by faith, he gives us a view of *the image we really are in God's presence*. Then "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, [this gloomy, frightened, strengthless sinner is] changed in the new man into the same image [the face of Christ staring back at us] from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- In his face our depravity is overcome.
- Our doubting is overpowered.
- Our darkness turned to light.
- Our own un-holiness fades away in the light of his Holiness.
- The strength of Christ revives us within
- His light is the newness of our hearts.
- The Light of his Countenance separates the new man from the vanity of our flesh and this world.
- The light of his countenance brings that love and joy that cannot be put into words
- The light of his countenance is our salvation from the temptation of our own flesh and this world. "*Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!*"

Don't misunderstand: our flesh is just as unholy as ever...

Romans 7: 18:...(in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:

Having begun in the Spirit we are "not made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal3:3) This newness is in spirit, in the heart. It is when the heart is turned to him by the Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 3: 16.)

## **III. WHEN WE HAVE THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE WE BEGIN TO WALK AGAIN IN HIS LIGHT.**

Gladness fills our hearts.

Ps 21:6: For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

Ps 4: 7: Thou has put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and wine increased.

We repent from our murmuring.

Psalm 42:5: Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

For a while, sin becomes hated

- Temptation weakened
- The soul separated from worldly pursuits
- From prideful ambition,

- From vain desires for respect
- From all the stuff of carnality.

We pray aright.

Ps 67:1: God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

We encourage our brethren, saying,

Isaiah 2:5: O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

**Illustration:** Art managing a business.

One of the hardest jobs in the world is managing people—thousands of books written on managing people. God's church and his people do not operate the way a business operates. No one can manage a sinner, only the light of his countenance in the heart

- All unity of heart between God and his people
- All unity of heart between brethren
- All unity of heart in the direction we should go together this week, this month, this year
- All unity of heart in the assurance that God has, is and shall provide
- All unity of heart which will manifest to those around us that we really do believe the Christ we preach
- ALL IS CREATED IN THE HEART BY GOD, THROUGH THE JOYFUL SOUND, BY THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE...

Psalm 89:15: Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

**Illustration:** Bigfoot.

You ever been so afraid that you could not take a step? One minute the birds were singing, the sun shining. The next minute all was dark and quite and I was frozen in fear so that I could not take a step. Yet, it was all because of seeing something that was not really even there.

We get that way at the sight of things that are really no foe to us. The reason we doubt and are tossed as we are now is:

1 Corinthians 13:12: For now we see through a glass, darkly;

The reason we are not more doers and less doubters is because in our flesh, we are...

James 1: 23:...like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But the Spirit of God will not let the redeemed of God become a forgetful hearer—the Spirit makes intercession within us—in the Light of his countenance he makes us ask for the Light of his countenance.

Psalm 36: 9: For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

As God shines his face---we look into the mirror of the perfect law of liberty—the perfect word, perfected by Christ on our behalf, in whom we have been delivered and are free. And seeing his face in the mirror staring back at us he strengthens faith within us and makes us happy in our service to him. So that we...

James 1: 25...“looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, and [is happy as we go.]

Singing with David:

Psalm 27:1: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 Corinthians 3: 17: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

#### **IV. THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE GROWS US INWARDLY**

The more we see Christ by faith—the image we really are--the more our inward man grows settled in him and in his grace. He will continue to shine this light.

Proverbs 4:18: But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

My brethren, look less to the face staring back at you in your earthly mirror. Look more to the face staring back at you in the light of the gospel of Christ.

- Our fleshly man is mortified and our inward man revived
- Our darkness made light
- Our feeble faith made mighty,
- Our self-righteous, self-holiness made to be abhorred

John 8:12: Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

And just the opposite is true as well. Looking at ourselves has the same effect on our hearts as someone who is always looking at themselves in the mirror.

Illustration: The girl in the hair salon.

The more we look at ourselves, at our works, at how far we imagine we have come and overcome, the more haughty and puffed up and sinful and dark and the more we walk by sight and not by faith. We become hell to ourselves and everyone around us—discouraged and a discouragement.

1 John 1:7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John 3: 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Hebrews 13: 9: Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. 10: We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

## **V. I MUST REMIND YOU, THAT THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE IS UNCHANGING.**

The believer does not always see his light.

Illustration: In dim light, you can look into a mirror but you can't see the face in the mirror. But the face is the still same even though you can't see it.

“Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face. His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan his work in vain; God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain.” William Cowper

After he brings us to remember we have no light, he reminds us...

James 1: 17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Hebrews 13: 8: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Everything in time changes but eternal is eternal. His love is everlasting—as eternal as God. Robed in Christ our Righteousness the believer is so perfect that he that is “purer eyes than to behold evil” sees no spot of sin in you. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” (Jer 29:11)

But what about my sin? Greater than sin is God's grace! He never lays sin to the charge of those whose sin “he put away by the sacrifice of himself”. Never un-redeems those for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption. Never un-regenerates those in whom the Light of life dwells.

## **VI. LASTLY, IF SEEING HIS FACE THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY DOES THIS IN OUR HEARTS NOW, WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WE SEE HIM FACE TO FACE? (1 John 3)**

1 Corinthians 13:12: For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

1 John 3: 2: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

We shall be like him all over, inwardly, outwardly, without spot or blemish, and we shall walk in the light of his countenance for all eternity.

Isaiah 60:19: The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

Revelation 21:23: And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

If we could we look less to the smile and favor of man and more to the light of his face now, there is nothing that would hold us back. By his grace, our puny spirits would become gigantic, and our feeble faith mighty.

“Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!”

“Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved”

Amen!