

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth**  
**Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**  
**Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**The Lost**  
**Proper 4**  
**2 Corinthians 4: 1-6**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

In your wisdom, O God, you call us here to worship you.

**We gather, alive to the Word of God.**

You call us to be fully alive with your life abundant,  
ready to listen and respond with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

**We listen, alive to the Word of God.**

You call us to be always watchful for your Word of wisdom,  
sometimes startling and unexpected,  
sometimes still and quiet,  
but always dwelling among us.

**We watch and wait for the Word of God**

**Prayer of Adoration and Invocation**

Blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

In your wisdom you have made all creation to worship you.

You call us to worship you now in this time and place,  
in unity with prophets, martyrs, and saints from all times and places.

As we prepare for worship, we pray that you will quiet our hearts,  
that we may hear your voice in your Word.

We pray that you will stir our hearts,  
that we may more faithfully follow Jesus,  
and that you will be glorified by the praise and prayers we offer you.

Bless those who lead us in worship with your Spirit.

May our worship today help us to offer our entire lives to you  
and unite us with your whole church throughout the world.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who with the Father and the Spirit is one God,

blessed forever. **Amen.**

**Children’s Hymn: “O Be Careful Little Eyes”**

**Call to Confession**

Prepare the way of the Lord!  
Let us make our confession to God.

**Prayer of Confession**

O Lord, great God,  
all holy, Father most gracious,  
filled with mercy and steadfast love,  
we are embarrassed to come before you,  
for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways,  
for we have rebelled against your wisdom  
and we have gotten into trouble,  
for we have rejected your fatherly guidance  
and have gotten lost altogether.  
To you belongs righteousness, O Lord,  
and to us confusion of face.  
O Lord, great God,  
all holy, filled with awe,  
Father, most gracious,  
filled with mercy and steadfast love,  
incline your ear to our troubles.  
Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you.  
Forgive us,  
not on the ground of our own righteousness,  
but on the ground of your great mercy.  
On the ground of your great mercy  
in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ.  
It is in his name that we pray,  
for he is our Savior and the mediator of the covenant of grace. Amen.

**Assurance of Pardon**

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
Your sins are pardoned.  
The penalty is paid.  
Thanks be to God.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread.  
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
 Forever and ever. Amen.**

**Hymn #333: "I Sing the Almighty Power of God"**

I sing the almighty power of God  
 that made the mountains rise,  
 that spread the flowing seas abroad  
 and built the lofty skies.  
 I sing the wisdom that ordained  
 the sun to rule the day;  
 the moon shines full at Gods command,  
 and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord,  
 that filled the earth with food;  
 God formed the creatures with a word,  
 and then pronounced them good.  
 Lord, how thy wonders are displayed,  
 where'er I turn my eyes,  
 if I survey the ground I tread,  
 or gaze upon the skies!

There's not a plant or flower below  
 but makes thy glories known,  
 and clouds arise and tempests blow  
 by order from thy throne,  
 while all that borrows life from thee  
 is ever in thy care,  
 and everywhere I could be,  
 thou, God, art present there.

**Responsive Reading**

**Psalm 81:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> Sing aloud to God our strength;  
 shout for joy to the God of Jacob!

<sup>2</sup> **Raise a song; sound the tambourine,  
 the sweet lyre with the harp.**

<sup>3</sup> Blow the trumpet at the new moon,  
at the full moon, on our feast day.

<sup>4</sup> **For it is a statute for Israel,  
a rule of the God of Jacob.**

<sup>5</sup> He made it a decree in Joseph  
when he went out over the land of Egypt.  
I hear a language I had not known:

**6 “I relieved your shoulder of the burden;  
your hands were freed from the basket.**

<sup>7</sup> In distress you called, and I delivered you;  
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;  
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah

**8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!  
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!**

<sup>9</sup> There shall be no strange god among you;  
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.

<sup>10</sup> **I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.  
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.**

**The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 81:1–10.**

**Prayer for illumination**  
**(Congregant Prepared)**

**Scripture**

**2 Corinthians 4: 1-6**

**4** Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. **2** But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God. **3** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. **4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. **5** For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. **6** For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

## Sermon

The world we live in is made up of only two kinds of people. Those who fully abide in Christ, the ones who live in the vine, grow by the stream of living water, and let the Word of the Lord guide every aspect of their lives; and those who do not.

Christians are compelled by the Holy Spirit that is living in them to bring the Word of God to those who have not yet found God.

We all know how difficult this can be, we share the Word of God in the way that we live, we share the word of God in conversation, we might even invite people to join us at church.

Yet even though we do all of these things, people still refuse to listen.

Christians know the peace that God brings them in their own lives and as they share the love of God with other in this world, they often wonder why other reject God so easily. Especially when we are going through times of trouble, we find comfort in the Word of God, and we wonder why others do not want Jesus in their life.

Truthfully, we find it perplexing, confusing and we just cannot wrap our heads around how people can so easily reject the Word of God in their lives. We cannot understand how people cannot believe in God, or how people can so easily be led astray by false prophets in this world when the Word of God is right there for anyone to read. We cannot understand how those who we choose to share the Gospel with cannot grab onto the Gospel, humble themselves before the Lord and receive their Eternal Salvation.

Today's Scripture does a bit to help explain why so many in this world do not come to God.

### **2 Corinthians 4: 3-4**

<sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The main reason the people cannot find God, is because he is hidden to them. The Gospel is veiled to those who are perishing. This is a reference back to the meeting Moses had with the Lord. He had to put a veil over his face because the radiance of God was still shining so brightly as it reflected off his face. Paul uses this to remind us that the truth of God is often veiled, hid away from those who do not know God. The same way that the Israelites could not clearly see the truth of God's plan for them, people today cannot see the truth of God's plan because it is veiled from them.

However, it is not veiled to everyone, it is veiled specifically to those who are perishing. Who are the perishing, the spiritually lost, the ones who choose to follow the ways of this world, the ones who worship their own false idols, the ones who create Jesus and God in their own image instead of the God of the Bible. The lost of this world, they are spiritually perishing, and the truth of the Gospel is veiled to them.

The Word of God is veiled to them not because God has hidden his truths from them, but because of the 'god of this world'.

Who is the god of this world?

Satan! Satan is the god of this world. We are told in the book of Ephesians that Satan is 'the prince of the power of the air'. Jesus tells us in the book of Matthew that the world is Satan's domain and John even refers to him as the 'Prince of this world.'

Satan will do anything in his power to prevent people from finding God in this world. How does he do this? well the Word of God never gives us a clear step by step on how Satan does this. However, he often does so by making people love the things of this world more than they love the truth of God's Word. He does this by making people love their sin, making people either ignore God completely, or making them edit out the parts of God's Word that they do not want to follow in their lives.

This is why so many people are uninterested in the truth of God's Word, because they cannot see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Satan blinds people to the truth that Jesus is the only way to Salvation. Satan does everything in his power to keep them addicted to their sin, worshipping false idols, and editing the Word of God; so that they can never discover the truth of God's Word and their Eternal Salvation.

### **2 Corinthians 4: 5-6**

<sup>5</sup> For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

So, we proclaim the truth, not our truth but God's truth into the world. We do this because we are God's servants, we are the ones who are called to be the Salt and Light of God's Word in this lost and broken world.

God's light has shone into our lives, and we are to be a reflecting of that light into the world around us. Christians are the evidence in this world that God is real. True

Christians live their lives according to the Scriptures, reflecting the light of God into the world.

This is why Satan works so hard to create false Christians. He wants people to be deceived by the ways of the world, to have the truth veiled. Satan creates as many false Christians as he can so he can keep as many people away from God as possible.

This is why it is so important for true Christians to shine their light out into the world. It is a light that is not veiled, it cuts through the darkness of this world and lights the way for the lost. It is when people see the light of God clearly reflected in the lives of his true followers that they begin to discover the truth of who God is and what his Scripture teaches.

This is daunting, being given the responsibility of living a life according to the scripture so that God can draw others into relationship with him, but this is the call that every true Christian is called to answer in their life as they learn to humbly serve the Lord. It is daunting, scary, and difficult, but it is also a magnificent blessing and wonderful opportunity to share our Lord and Saviour with those who do not have the blessings of God in their lives yet.

The truth is that the greatest witness to the truth of the Scripture is a life that has been changed by God's presence.

This is probably something we should spend a moment considering. If the most powerful witness of Christ is a changed life, perhaps the reason we are not seeing people become true Christians in mass, is because they are not seeing changed lives.

Christians get quite comfortable making excuses for why their lives are no different from the worldly. Yet the truth is until we begin to truly walk in the light of the Lord, let his light shine into the deepest and darkest corners of our lives chasing away the shadows and the sin hidden there, we cannot fully reflect that light into our lives. Until we let God fully into our lives, we are not only hurting ourselves and our relationship with God, we are also hurting our ability to witness to the world.

Yes, Satan is out there doing everything possible to prevent people from discovering the truth of God's Word. However, we cannot just blame him, we have to take some of the accountability ourselves. A dirty mirror does not reflect light nearly as well as a clean mirror.

If we want people to find God, we have to have God in us and we need to reflect his teachings clearly in our lives, so that that light can shine out into the lives of others.

Our lives need to reflect the truth that 'Jesus is Lord'. Our lives need to reflect Christ so much, that the people we interact with do not see us, instead they see Christ. They

need to see that we are not our own masters, that we humbly serve the Lord. Jesus is the one with the power, Jesus is the only one who can transform people, We follow him. We obey him.

Jesus is the Lord, and it is a message that needs to be proclaimed loudly in the lives of all who follow him, and it is a message that is obscured by all of the false teachers and false Christians in this world.

Jesus is our King, and we are meant to follow him, to obey him. We are meant to obey all of the Scripture, all of it, even the parts we do not like, not only because they are wise and good for our lives, but because they are mandatory. We are his humble and faithful servants.

There is a lesson in all of this that is important for us. We do not have to convince people to believe in God, we do not need to argue with people who do not believe in God. We do not have to plan how to convert people, we do not have to figure out how to teach people about God, we do not need to bring people to Christ. We do not make it happen; God does.

We just need to trust and obey, abide in Christ, and let Jesus do his work, while we do as he tells us and guides us to where he wants us in this world. He is Lord and we are servants.

Yes, it is true that Satan does everything in his power to veil the truth of God's Word from the people of this world. Yes, it is true that the lost are often blind to the Scriptures, blind to the fact that Salvation is there for them. However, it is also true that when they see the lives of God's faithful, people who have been changed by the Holy Spirit the light of the Lord is reflected into their lives. When people see people make amazing changes in their lives, when people see the powerful impact that God's word has in the life of his servants, it speaks to something greater happening to them, and it opens the door for God to draw people to Him through us.

We need to acknowledge our place in this. We need to serve God, and by serving him we share his Word with the world. We need to Live as the Salt and Light of God's Word in this world, allowing Him to be at work in us, changing who we are into who he is calling us to be, so that we can reflect that to those who are still searching for him through veiled eyes.

Let us pray,

**Hold on to this Comfort in All Trials and Temptations**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
through your Son  
you promised us your Holy Spirit,



that he will convict the world of sin,  
of righteousness and of judgment.  
Enlighten our hearts,  
that we may confess our sins,  
obtain eternal righteousness through faith in Christ,  
and hold on to this comfort  
in all our trials and temptations,  
that Christ is Lord over the devil and death and all things  
and that he will graciously deliver us  
out of all our afflictions  
and make us partakers of eternal salvation;  
through your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one true God, now and forever.

**Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Easter 4, Cantate**

**Hymn: "O Church Arise"**

O Church arise and put your armour on  
Hear the call of Christ our Captain  
For now the weak can say  
that they are strong  
In the strength that God has given  
With shield of faith and belt of Truth  
We'll stand against the devil's lies  
An army bold whose battle cry is love  
Reaching out to those in darkness.

Our call to war to love the captive soul  
But to rage against the captor  
And with the sword that makes  
the wounded whole  
We will fight with faith and valor  
When faced with trials on ev'ry side  
We know the outcome is secure  
And Christ will have the prize  
for which He died  
An inheritance of nations

**Chorus**

Arise shine for your Light has come  
Arise shine for the risen Son

Lift your eyes we are His radiant bride  
Arise O Church arise

Come see the cross where  
love and mercy meet  
As the Son of God is stricken  
Then see His foes lie crushed  
beneath His feet  
For the Conqueror has risen  
And as the stone is rolled away  
And Christ emerged from his grave  
This victory march continues 'til the day  
Every eye and heart shall see Him

So Spirit come put strength  
in every stride  
Give grace for every hurdle  
That we may run with faith  
to win the prize  
Of a servant good and faithful  
As saints of old still line the way  
Retelling triumphs of His grace  
We hear their calls and  
hunger for the day  
When with Christ we stand in Glory

## **Communion**

### **Invitation to the Table**

As we prepare to celebrate holy communion, let us remember that Scripture calls us to examine ourselves before God. We are taught that eating and drinking unworthily brings judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28-29). Let us therefore ask God for the proper spirit in which to celebrate the sacrament.

Let us Pray,

Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deed, grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost thoughts as you know them.

Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him.

May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy to us and glory to you. **Amen.**

**The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you;  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts;  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God;  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is truly right to glorify you, Father,  
 and to give you thanks,  
 for you alone are God, living and true,  
 dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and forever.  
 Fountain of all life and source of all goodness,  
 you made all things and fill them with your blessing;  
 you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.  
 Countless throngs of angels stand before you  
 to serve you night and day,  
 and, beholding the glory of your presence,  
 they offer you unceasing praise.  
 Joining with them,  
 and giving voice to every creature under heaven,  
 we glorify your name  
 and lift our voices in joyful praise

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of  
 power and might, heaven and earth are full  
 of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Heavenly Father, show forth among us  
 the presence of your life-giving Word and Holy Spirit,  
 to sanctify us and your whole church through this sacrament.  
 Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ,  
 may be one in him and may remain faithful in love and hope.  
 And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf  
 and these grapes from many hills into one cup,  
 grant, O Lord, that your whole church may soon be gathered  
 from the ends of the earth into your kingdom

Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and in all places:

### **The Apostles Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. AMEN.**

### **Communion**

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end: at supper with them he took bread, and after giving thanks to you, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do it for the remembrance of me."

Holy God, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead,

proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand,  
 awaiting his coming in glory,  
 and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us,  
 this bread and this cup,  
 we praise you and we bless you.

**Taking of the bread**

Take and eat.  
 This is the body of Christ, which is [given] for you.  
 Do this, remembering him.

**Drinking of the cup**

This cup is the new covenant  
 sealed by Christ's blood,  
 which was shed that the sins of many  
 might be forgiven.  
 Drink from it, all of you

**Prayer after Communion**

Loving, glorious, gracious God,  
 you have fed us at your table.  
 In your mercy you have nourished us,  
 and we are grateful.  
 This day, in this time and place,  
 we connect through the centuries  
 with the church everlasting,  
 those who before us broke bread and took the cup.  
 Help us now, as we leave this place,  
 to continue the work of the holy catholic church,  
 to practice the communion of the saints,  
 and, with hearts and souls refreshed, to seek your will.  
 Help us, now that we have been fed,  
 to feed those who are hungry,  
 invite in the stranger,  
 and visit the imprisoned.  
 You have met us where we are, O Lord,  
 and filled our needs yet again.  
 May we do the same for all of your children;  
 may we leave this place to love abundantly.  
 May we love you with all our hearts.  
 May we love our neighbors as ourselves.  
 In Christ's name we pray. **Amen.**

**Invitation to Offering****Offering****Offertory Prayer****(Congregant Prepared)****Closing Hymn #571: "Lord I Want to Be a Christian"**

Lord, I want to be a Christian  
 ina my heart, ina my heart;  
 Lord, I want to be a Christian ina my heart.  
 Ina my heart, ina my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be a Christian ina my heart.

Lord, I want to be more loving  
 ina my heart, ina my heart;  
 Lord, I want to be more loving ina my heart.  
 Ina my heart, ina my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be more loving ina my heart.

Lord, I want to be more holy  
 ina my heart, ina my heart;  
 Lord, I want to be more holy ina my heart.  
 Ina my heart, ina my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be more holy ina my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus  
 ina my heart, ina my heart;  
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus ina my heart.  
 Ina my heart, ina my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus ina my heart.

**Pastoral Prayer**

We praise and thank you, O Lord,  
 that you have fed us with your Word and at your table.  
 Grateful for your gifts and mindful of the communion of your saints,  
 we offer to you our prayers for all people.

God of compassion,  
 we remember before you  
 the poor and the afflicted,  
 the sick and the dying,

prisoners and all who are lonely,  
 the victims of war, injustice, and inhumanity,  
 and all others who suffer from whatever their sufferings may be called.

O Lord of providence  
 holding the destiny of the nations in your hand,  
 we pray for our country.  
 Inspire the hearts and minds of our leaders  
 that they, together with all our nation,  
 may first seek your kingdom and righteousness  
 so that order, liberty, and peace may dwell with your people.

O God the Creator,  
 we pray for all nations and peoples.  
 Take away the mistrust and lack of understanding  
 that divide your creatures;  
 increase in us the recognition that we are all your children.

O Savior God,  
 look upon your church in its struggle upon the earth.  
 Have mercy on its weakness,  
 bring to an end its unhappy divisions,  
 and scatter its fears.  
 Look also upon the ministry of your church.  
 Increase its courage, strengthen its faith,  
 and inspire its witness to all people,  
 even to the ends of the earth.  
 [Silence]  
 Author of grace and God of love,  
 send your Holy Spirit's blessing to your children here present.  
 Keep our hearts and thoughts in Jesus Christ, your Son, our only Savior, in whose name  
 we pray. **Amen.**

### **Benediction**

The grace of Christ attend you,  
 the love of God surround you,  
 the Holy Spirit keep you  
 now and forevermore. **Amen.**