

1. 132 Hymn 75.
2. 551 Hymn 6.M.
3. 136 Hymn. 2.M.

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~~and~~ A discourse on the text:

"If our Gospel be hid, it is hid
to them that are lost." II Cor. IV: 3.

In the estimate to be ~~made~~ ^{formed} ~~made~~ in
regard to the Revelation which God
has made to us, a due discrimina-
tion is to be preserved between what
is unquestionably
~~perfectly~~ mysterious and beyond
our mental grasp, and what is
merely obscure to us through our
own indisposition to its study,
our inability to appreciate it.
The former is in its nature un-
fathomable, and not so because one
man's intellect is ~~more~~ ^{less} vigorous
than another's, but the difficulties

Bible mysteries

which ~~they~~ involve are precisely of such a character as to be solved by no vigor of intellect however mighty, & by no process of investigation however patient, profound and persevering. They are mysteries, because they are "the secret things that belong unto the Lord our God".

We do meet such obscurities in the course of our meditations upon the plan of Divine Revelation. Nor do we regard the objection raised against the Word of God on the score of its mysteries, as anything more than a childish quibble, the mere

futile effort of Infidelity to shake
off the pressing conviction of the
Truth of Revelation, which has
taken fast hold upon ~~his~~ ^{the} conscience.
For whatever emanates from God
must partake to some extent of
His own character, and as He is
beyond our capacity to search out,
we naturally expect to find some
things in His revelations which
would be also beyond the grasp
of the most gigantic intellect. And
we do not object to this state of
things; for were it otherwise, it
would dethrone God, and destroy
our reverence for His character.

Since in the language of Dr Spencer,
"A comprehensible God, is no
God at all, for what is comprehensi-
ble is not infinite."

This is one class of subjects which
are set forth in Scripture, con-
cerning which it may be said
they are hid from all, — not
from those "that are lost," only,
but from all finite minds. But
there are many points of immense
weight and importance which
have no intrinsic mystery — no
inherent obscurity about them
which are presented for our
consideration in the word of God,

about which men, the majority of men
affect to find such darkness and
insoluble mystery, that to them
at least these matters seem
to be hidden in the gloom of
moral midnight. Now as we gave
the reason why the former class
of mysteries were inscrutable, so
we say of this class, that they
owe their apparently mysterious
character to nothing at all in
their nature ~~inherently~~, but to
the fact that men will not
turn their thoughts with earnest
intensity upon them, and hence
the plainest representations of

These matters
are so entirely disregarded by them
as to make it a necessary con-
sequence that they fail properly
to appreciate them. Hence of
course they are hid from them.
There is no occasion for this. I
conceive that this is what the
Apostle means to convey in the
announcement of the whole
verse. Oh! Ye who complain that
there is an unintelligible mystery
in our Gospel, notwithstanding
that in presenting it, we have
not handled the word of God
deceitfully, nor walked in craftiness
but by manifestation of the truth

commended ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," Know ye, that "if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

And who are they? A momentous question! In ^{the terms of} its answer are included the immense majority of the human race. All over the Earth are found those ^{who} are lost, and to whom "the Gospel is hid." I know you will readily admit that in those dark and dreary regions of the Earth where the ^{Light of the} blessed Gospel has never yet been kindled there the people

that sit in that region and shadow
of Death, are lost and ruined.
They are involved in ignorance
immersed in Superstition, degra-
ded in idolatry, and sunk in
Barbarism, for "the dark places
of the Earth are full of the
habitations of cruelty." To these
wretched beings "the Sun of Right-
eousness" has never yet arisen
"with healing in his beams," and
in their fearfully degraded
condition, it is obviously true
that to them that are thus
lost the Gospel is hid. They
have no knowledge of its nature

or its Author, of its provisions, or
of its precious and unspeakable
importance to their soul's eternal
interests. And hence not only its
mysteries, but every thing connected
with it remotely or more nearly
is hidden and unknown to them.

We may add, that it is the ex-
perience of Missionaries who have
been laboring for years to bring
the Gospel to bear upon them
in their benighted condition, that
the mind of a heathen Idolater
covered over with this thick veil
of previously implanted super-
stition, seems almost proof against

any impression which they strive
to produce. And now what is
true of these Heathen Idolaters
is found verified in many a
mournful instance, in thousands
of cases, in this Christian Land.
Change the name of the cause
from ignorance & Superstition
to "Pride, prejudice and ungodly
lusts," and you will find here in
our very midst those upon
whose hearts rests a thick imper-
vious veil, that effectually hides
the Gospel from them. It is of
special importance to bear
constantly in mind that the veil

is not upon their Gospel; that is
unveiled, thanks to God in this
glorious Protestant Land, where
we have an open Bible and a
free Press, and no State dare
as yet enact a Law forbidding
the people to obey the sacred
mandate of Jesus Christ, to "Search
the Scriptures." No veil is on the
Gospel. But the veil is on the
hearts of men themselves. And
worst and most unpromising
feature of all, men are drawing
its folds more & more closely
over their hearts, that the Gospel
may be more effectually hid. Let

us look into the manner of the operation
of these causes and endeavor to
ascertain how it is ⁵¹ that Pride
prevents the access of the Gospel
to the heart. And I remark that
this constitutes one of the most
formidable barriers to the suc-
cess of the Spirit of God in His
operations upon the heart. It
was in full view of this fact that
our Savior so often warned his
disciples against it. "Whosoever
is ashamed of me & my words
in this wicked and adulterous
generation of him will I be
ashamed when I come with the

glory of my Father and His Holy Angels
"Blessed is he whosoever shall ^{not} be
offended in ^{me.} as I am!" When Christ
made His appearance upon the Earth,
so humble in his origin, and when
his condition was so lowly &
his associates were so mean in
the esteem of the World, and more
especially when He preached doc-
trines so humiliating to the
Pride of the human heart, it
was so revolting to the haughty
spirits of the Jews that they
rejected Him, and all His in-
structions and refused to re-
cieve Him as the Messiah at all,

persecuted, crucified, & slew Him
as a Malefactor. I have not
a doubt that the offended Pride
of the Nation more than any
other cause, led to this fearful
catastrophe. And still we find
men who are swayed by the
same Spirit, and who show most
clearly by their conduct, that had
they lived in that age, & had
they been Jews ~~too~~, they ^{too} would
have imbrued their hands
in the precious blood of this
humble Jesus of Nazareth.
And nothing proves this more
conclusively than their rejection

with so much bitterness, the doctrines
of the Gospel. The grand funda-
mental doctrine of ^{the total depravity of} human nature
is among those points which are
held in the utmost detestation
and abhorrence by the mass of
unrenewed men. And I pray
you to bear in mind that this
is hateful most of all to the
Pride of the human heart.
It is this which makes it hateful.
The heart loves to cherish the
delusion, (it is flattering) that
there is something good & praise
worthy in itself. And there is no
thing so objectionable to the sin

penitent man, as to preach to him
that he is by nature corrupt &
~~alienated~~ from the Life of God.
He revolts at it. He pushes away
the shoulder, he stoppeth the
ear, he refuses to hear it. And
in many cases, the experience of
men would be that the greater
efforts made to ~~prove~~ the doc-
trine and to convince men
of its truth, the greater resist-
ance is offered to it. And
yet this doctrine ~~rejected~~ &
disbelieved, men must be lost
eternally. I would "that men could
understand that this is true."

that the salvation of the soul is intimately connected with a knowledge and belief of the doctrine ~~of~~ of the total depravity of human nature. For then it would occupy that position in the theological creed to which its vast importance entitles it. But alas! such is the pride of the human heart that it is one of the parts of our Gospel which seems to be hid from the men of the world. But if the ~~nature~~ nature of man be not radically corrupt and depraved why does the Bible tell us that "the imagination of the heart of man is only evil and

continually? That "God looked upon the
Earth, and behold it was corrupt?"
Why does God say of man "Who can bring a
clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."
What is man that he should be clean?
Or he which is born of a woman that
he should be righteous? Why did
David exclaim in the bitterness of his
agony & remorse "Behold I was
shapen in iniquity and in Sin did
my Mother conceive me." Why does
God say "The wicked are estranged
from the womb. They go astray
as soon as they be born—Speaking
lies?" And what means the Apostle
when he tells the Ephesians "Ye were

by nature the children of wrath, even
as others." I can understand nothing
at all from these passages except
that the Bible teaches that the
nature of Man is totally & radically
depraved. And I would ask, upon
what other principle are we to explain
the universal prevalence of wickedness
all over the Earth, if not that there
is in the heart an ever welling
fountain of corruption which
every man brings into Life with
him? If, as some teach, the moral
character of every human being
is like a pure unsullied sheet
of paper, at his birth, upon which

each man with his own hand writes
his own character & destiny—
how comes it to pass, that all
invariably without exception have
written in the same dark and
gloomy colors the character
he is to bear through Life?

Upon what principle is it to be
accounted for, that all are wicked
and that from the earliest de-
monstrations of the disposition?

Why is that the world is desolated
by war, Society broken up by
envy & malignity, hatred, wrath
& strife & variance? Why is "man
a wolf to man?" Account for

it on the scriptural doctrine of the
radical & universal depravity of
the human heart. And I have
not a doubt that were all the
restraints of God's Providential
Gov^t withdrawn, such would
be the fierceness of its course
and the violence of its exhibi-
tions that the Earth would be-
come a Lazar house of misery
and a Pandemonium for the
residence of the Spirits of
Darkness. But present this
doctrine to be rec^d by men,
the Pride of the human heart
(only one of the developments of

its native depravity) is at once
aroused, and the doctrine is
denounced as a slander upon
human nature. And in many
cases it is best to restrain argu-
ment with such cases. The surest
way to secure conviction
upon the mind is to leave them
to their own experience. And
the word of God, and the
experience of men on this
subject is, that one of the first
effects produced upon the
mind by the Holy Spirit, is to
enlighten the seeking soul in
the knowledge of its own

deep inveterate depravity. Until
this conviction is fastened upon the
heart, not one step can be gained
in the progress of the Soul to-
wards its salvation. We must
know it. We must feel it. We
will feel it. The very difficulties
which arise in the pathway of
the inquirer are all traceable
to this fundamental cause.
Hence until its existence is as-
certained, & believed no step
will be taken aright, & it is
in consequence of the pride
of the heart that the Gospel
is his to them that are lost."

And no man need ever expect to have
the ear of God bent in listening
Condescension and Graciousness,
while he comes to the Throne of
Grace, under the impression
that in him "that is in his flesh
there dwelleth, any good thing."
"God," we are told, "resisteth the proud,
but giveth grace unto the humble."
Surely he scorneth the scorners,
but he giveth grace unto the lowly.
"Humble yourselves therefore un-
der the mighty hand of God, that
ye may be ~~exalted~~ ^{exalted} in due time."
The Gospel will remain hidden
effectually to you, until Pride is subdued.

But Pride rejects another doctrine
which is of vital importance, to
the Sinner, (i.e.) the Sinner's inability.

It is not to be wondered at that
men in their unregenerate state
are opposed to this doctrine, since
we find even Ministers of the Gospel,
who in dilating upon human respons-
ibility dwell with so much delight
upon the exalted faculties with
which men are endowed, &
thence deduce the obligation
to serve God, by turning to Him
of their own Will & by their own
power. This is the doctrine that
is so sweet to the unregenerate. And

hence when the True doctrine is presented to them;—when men are told that "By the original Corruption of our Nature, we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good"—it is the most natural of all impulses to reject the doctrine. It cuts the roots of all pride & self esteem. It brings down all lofty conceptions of self, & subjects the sinner to the most entire dependence upon God as his only Helper. No natural heart can receive this doctrine with cordiality. Let a Gospel sermon be based upon

and fairly & honestly develop the text
"No man can come to me except
the Father which sent me draw
him" — Let a man preach upon
the other declaration of Xt. "Without
me ye can do nothing." And
the ^{carnal} heart rejects it at once. This
Gospel is hid from those who are
thus lost. It requires too ^{costly} a
sacrifice for them to yield up the
cherished thought that there
is something that they can do,
that will not only effect their
salvation, but by which they
can meritoriously purchase the
favor of God. This in the language

of a modern Divine is what they call
their "favorite doctrine of ability" -
but which is on the contrary
"a favorite falsehood." Preach to
them if you will of "their obligation to
repent, their duty to be X'tians, & tell
them "that there is much to do, that
they must do freely & voluntarily;
and then add to this, that their
help is in God, that they are
undone and dependent sinners
to be saved ~~if~~ saved at all by
grace through Jesus Christ"
and this is the hardest thing
to receive; they cannot under-
stand it. They do not believe it; it

is hid from them through the
influence of the Pride of the
heart. The term "Lost" is well
applied to those from whom our
Gospel is thus hid. They are
indeed lost to all proper esti-
mate of their own truest
highest interest and happiness.
They are lost to all clear
understanding of the the great
truths of the Gospel, and all
idea of the Way of Life thro'
the scheme of Redemption.
They are like travellers who
have mistaken their way, &
having wandered in a wilder-

ness of confusion" where wilds
immeasurably spread seem
lengthening as they go," they
become finally lost utterly
& irretrievably. So the man to
whom this Gospel is hid
has so long been treading
the devious paths of worldly
wisdom, & worldly enjoyment
that his mind is totally in-
volved in confusion, and
is so completely lost "stumbling
over the dark mountains
of perdition," that he has not
even a correct idea as to
the direction of the way that

leads to Life eternal. And unless
a Heavenly Light be shed upon
his pathway, and the Holy Spirit
the Divine Guide be sent to
him in his lost condition
his confusion & perplexity will
only deepen, and darken until
he finally reach the precipice
of Despair over which he will
sink into the bottomless ^{pit of} Perdition.

How sad the reflection that men
in this awfully lost condition
are so lost also to their
danger! " ^{what meanest thou,} ~~Awake~~ oh Sleeper
arise & call upon thy God, if so
be that God will think upon thee
that Thou perish not! "

Not is Pride the only influence that
casts a veil upon the heart, But
2^{dly} Prejudice also hides the Gos-
pel from those who are lost.

A baleful influence is it that pre-
vents a man from examining for
himself a Truth of vital importance
to him, and merely because he
has conceived improper views of
it from false representations ~~and~~
~~and~~ chooses to reject it as false &
hateful. This influence Prejudice
exerts. Many of the doctrines of
the Gospel have been caricatured
and travestied so absurdly as
to present them in any other

than their true light. They have been
clad in such repulsive garb
as to drive men away even from
their slightest investigation.
~~The~~ proof that it is the influence
of Prejudice which thus prevents
men from embracing these truths
we need only reflect that very
frequently when the self same
doctrines are presented fairly
and these men have an opportu-
nity of considering them in their
true light, all objection vanishes
at once and they see their
entire reasonableness and
consistency. And furthermore, it is

a well known fact, that certain great doctrines of the Gospel have had certain distinctive names affixed to them, by which they are known and such objectionable features have been supposed without examination to belong to these doctrines, that the very ^{utterance of the} names by which they are known, is sufficient to arouse the opposition & hatred of many men. And yet present the substance of these doctrines & conceal the name, or call them by some other name, and no objection, whatever is raised but the doctrines are admitted & received.

save by attributing it to Prejudice
And I know not how else, to account
for a phenomenon which is not
unfrequently exhibited by men
who in their unregenerate con-
dition reject these doctrines
and yet when a radical change
has been wrought in their na-
tures by the regenerating influ-
ences of the Holy Spirit, the
same doctrines are insensibly
embraced as those most per-
fectly natural and consistent
with the System of Divine
Truth, and the nature of
man and the exigencies
of the Soul. They have been trained

and educated in the hatred of
these doctrines and no amount
of argument however pro-
found and unanswerable
will ever produce in their minds
a conviction of their truthfulness.
But, it has been found, in more
cases than one, that if left to
the ~~own~~ influences of the Holy
Spirit — if they ever are
regenerated at all, — among
the very first doctrines re-
ceived & embraced by them
are these ~~once~~ so hateful.
The elements of this form of pre-
judice are ignorance, early

education, and intellectual
Pride. They are ignorant of
the true nature of the Gospel
& hence form incorrect notions
in regard to it. They are
trained from early youth, to re-
gard the Gospel ⁱⁿ ~~with~~ some of
its parts, with abhorrence and this
seems ~~one~~ ^{all barriers} of the most difficult
~~barriers of all~~ to overcome.

And many men having conceived
the idea that they are possessed
of a most exalted Intellect, refuse
to receive any doctrine which
they cannot comprehend.
And as there are many things

in the Gospel hard to be understood
and which require an humble
and docile disposition in order
to their being properly understood,
they refuse to receive them & as
of old these are to the one set
"a stumbling-block," & to another
"foolishness." The immediate
inevitable & inseparable effects
of Prejudice are that it con-
tracts the views, it hardens the
hearts, it blinds the understanding
and congeals the genial flow
of ^{the} social affections of men.

It is not to be wondered at
then, that ~~to men~~ thus lost to

"whatsoever things ^{are} true, honest, just
pure, lovely, and of good report"
our "Gospel is hid." I could
particularize, but deem it best
most expedient to leave the
subject in its mere outline
so that each may have as
wide a margin as possible
for a personal application
to his own case. With one
remark I pass from this topic.
Whatever may be the form in
which Prejudice operates to
produce its dreadful effects
upon the mind, one thing is
certain, that if ~~the~~ veil it

draws over the mental vision
be not removed, while it surely
proves them, in one sense
to be lost & ruined now, it
will, ^{ultimately} terminate in, ^{the} irretreva-
ble loss of the Soul.

But I have assigned, as a
3^d Cause why the Gospel
is hid, the dominion of some
ungodly lust. The operation of
this cause differs somewhat
from that of the two former,
in that along with ^{dominion,} ~~the existence~~
and while cherishing some
lust, sinful in its nature, there
may be some considerable intel-

Actual Light. Much of the Theory
of the Gospel may be known, &
there are times when the facts
that the heart is depraved, that
we must be born again, that
God is angry, Heaven shut, &
Hell open for the sinner, are
far from being hid from the
man that is lost. And in the
time of some dire extremity
when he is brought nigh to
the eternal world, and the
tribunal of Eternal Justice
he sees enough to realize in
some good his imminent
peril. But alas! when the clouds

of terror are dispersed, and the things of this goodly Earth once more array themselves in all their wonted smiling & deceitful garb. Then he forgets his danger, and the veil is again drawn over his hardened heart, and the Gospel is effectually hid from him. The experience of the man of God furnished him with melancholy instances of the influence of such lusts over men, in keeping men from a correct appreciation of the blessings of the Gospel.

It is recorded of one man that he
~~The man~~ called upon his Pastor
"one evening in the greatest anxiety
of mind.... He had become suddenly
alarmed on account of his condi-
tion as a sinner. His feelings
quite overcame him. He wept
much. He was an intelligent, well
educated man, who had seen
much of the world, - & evidently
possessed a quick & ready mind....
He had a good degree of intellectu-
al knowledge on the subject of
religion. He was evidently a
man of sound understanding.
He continued to call on his Pastor
for months: but he attained no

peace of mind - no hope in Christ.
He appeared from the first so sin-
cere, so earnest, attended all the
religious services so punctually
and in all respects manifested
so much determination, that
the confident expectation was in-
dulged that he would become
a Christian. But he continued in
much the same mind, and not
even a conjecture could be
formed why a man who ap-
peared to know the truths of the
Gospel so well, and feel them
so deeply, should not make some
progress in his religious attempts.

A few weeks after this, his Pastor saw
him in such company as to sug-
gest to his mind the thought that
he might possibly be addicted
to the use of intoxicating drinks.

On inquiry he found this to be so.
The man was told of this affection-
ately by his Pastor & warned that
it was a device of Satan to hide
the blessed hope of the Gospel from
him. He at first acknowledged the
fact, but did not believe it injured,
afterwards promised to quit but
did not, — he kept on — he lost
all regard for religion — he forsook
the Church — and is for aught that

is known to the contrary, is still
an irreligious man." Now this
is but an illustration of the way
in which the cherishing ^{of} a sinful
lust blinds the mind to the
blessings of the Gospel. And
this is but one lust. The celebrated
Mr Nettleton is said ^{once} to have
remarked "if a hard drinking
man gets a hope, it will be
likely to be a false hope!"

I care not what may be the
name or xter of the reigning
lust - the love of the world -
in any of its forms, will just
as effectually as ~~strong~~ drink hide

the Gospel from the hapless
subject.

I will venture to conclude
what I have to say on this
subject, by repeating the re-
mark, that there is no veil on
the Gospel. Oh no! Praised be
God! In this Land where
diabolical hands
no ~~side~~ ~~grasp~~ of Ecclesiasti-
cal Tyranny dare lay its ruthless
& polluted grasp upon the
pure Gospel, here it is
open & uncovered & he may
read that runs. "The wayfaring
man tho' a fool need not
err therein." Ten thousand pulpits

through this broad land of civil
& Religious liberty, Sabbath after
Sabbath are holding it forth
in its purity, brightness,
simplicity & truthfulness, &
all are welcome to read
& understand. Over 40 millions
of copies of the blessed Volume con-
taining "our Gospel" have been
issued since 1804. How then can
it be hid? It is not hid! There
is ~~no~~ veil upon it. And so
plain and simple and clear
is it ^{in its heavenly instructions that} we may well conclude
"If our gospel be hid, - it is
hid to them that are lost."