

Again

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[0 : 00] Will you turn with me this evening now to John chapter 12 and that portion which we read of it.

And let us read again at verse 27, the word of our Lord Jesus. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?

Father, save me from this owl, but for this cause came I unto this owl. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.

Especially the very last word there. The word again in that sentence from heaven.

I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. Now this evening I want to speak to you from just this one word.

[1 : 14] Very familiar word. A word of only two syllables. And one of these syllables comprised of just a single letter.

The word again. Now the selection of just one word for a text will not, I hope, strike you as odd.

And if it does initially, then I hope that as we go on you'll find the subject is not discolored in the least by one tinge of oddness.

While I believe a preacher in a pulpit should do all that he can to arrest the attention of his hearers, I do not think that it is his place to misuse scripture or to do odd things with the holy word of God.

For that is not my intention this evening. But if we stop and look at this word, the word again, it's a word which when we take it in its various settings and relationships, comprises almost a Bible in itself.

[2 : 39] It's a word that's shot through with the amazing grace of God.

It seems to me as though it's a word with which God could not have written the Bible if he wanted the Bible to be a complete revelation to us of what he is and what is possible for us involved.

Some words catch you, don't they? And they lay hold of you and carry you along and they have a special meaning for you.

Perhaps you begin to think of them in certain settings. Or in certain relationships with other words. As words which have been wonderfully blessed to you by God.

I hope there's many people in the congregation like that this evening. And for you these words have a special connotation and a special meaning. Perhaps it wouldn't be understood by anyone else.

[3 : 49] You've made them. Perhaps it's just one word. You've made your own. And I wondered if you've ever paused to consider what a wonderful, very wonderful position this word has in the revelation of God to honor.

As I was saying, it's a word which he uses very frequently. A word without which our Bible would not mean what it does mean.

It occupies a very large place in the inspired record. Some time ago it captured my attention.

I went to one of these big books, probably the biggest one in my study. Young's Concordance. And it singles out words and gives you lists of course words of words to be found in the Bible.

And in Young's Concordance there are literally pages and pages yes, but pages that list the use, God's use of the word again.

[5 : 17] I think that's very significant. Significant of a God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish.

Significant of a God who purposed to redeem sinners and to save them and to restore them again into the image and likeness in which he had first created them and to do more to lift them into newness of life in Christ.

The very frequency with which the word is used speaks to us of the tender mercy of God. And of course with such a word it's natural.

It's not always used in the same connotation. not always used with the same meaning and yet it has a continuity of meaning. And it's one of these words that when it's attached to or set alongside other words gives them a new meaning and a new depth and a new vitality for us.

And one of the words which if we pause to look at it interpret any particular verse along a very certain direction for us or we could put that another way it's a particular word which can bring us into the sure light of the mind of God.

[7 : 01] and I think that no matter how it's used when it's used by the spirit of God it breathes of the power of God and his tenderness always full of promise and very often full of promise it's like a dawn the dawning of a new day that promises greater and higher on better things.

In a census evening I want to do what I don't very often do in a Sabbath evening just do a kind of word study and not one word with you the word again.

It's in our text but we'll come back to our text. I find it in one of the instances in which it caught my attention in relation also to the ministry of Jesus as it is here.

It's recorded in Matthew chapter 4 but you don't need to look it up it's a familiar portion of you. You remember Jesus was led we read by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan.

You remember how Satan went about his temptation and how Christ answered it is written he said then Satan changing himself into an angel of light for a moment into such an angel of light that only the saviour himself would have recognized that it was not an angel of light but was the angel of darkness.

[8 : 49] Satan said ah it is written he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways so go up onto the pinnacle of the temple with me and cast yourself down.

It is written and had it been you or had it been me we would have thought yes the angel of light coming with the sure word of God and you know men have used the word of God in that way they've taken up reptiles and poisonous snakes to prove that the Bible is true when the angel of light has tempted the angel of darkness has tempted them Jesus said to Satan it is written Jesus said it is written again it is written in another place the whole implication of the Lord Jesus is this let's take your scripture and compare it with another scripture let's balance what you're quoting out of context with another place from God's word my friends we've got a lesson very simple and yet a vitally important lesson to learn out of that first again that Jesus used in his own ministry it is written yes but it is written again

Satan is not allowed by Christ to twist or to wrench the scripture out of its proportion and to use it as a lever that will lead to evil what do we have to learn we have to learn the wonderful proportion and the balance of the word of God we have to learn that it doesn't use to learn a text out of its context and then make a slick phrase of it with which to pin people's thoughts and people's actions down to one special line of our own you know almost perhaps there is no exception but certainly it is true to say that almost every distortion of the gospel of Christ has rested on truth rested out of its context or if truth looked at an imbalance there is no sex no heresy allied to the

Christian faith but what rests on some portion of scripture usually on just a text a phrase or a sentence and the text the phrase or the sentence rested out of its context out of its setting in God's word out of its whole atmosphere that which gives it interpretation and colour and meaning for us this says the devil is from the word of God this will say that Jehovah has witnessed at your door this is from the word of God this the seventh day Adventists will say for half its gospel anyway or three quarters of it this is from the word of God how do you meet it in the same way as Christ met it you get to know the scriptures and get to know it so well that you will know when scripture is being abused or distorted or twisted for a specific purpose the balance the harmony the unity and the entity of the word of God as a whole is something very important it is written ah yes but my friend it is written again apply that to many truths apply it to your own life for many lives are living under the umbrella of a twist of scripture you know

I have met in my years of preaching many people who for example make an umbrella of the electing love of God and they use some of the loveliest and most precious scriptures and they give them a twist and then they say if I'm going to be saved I'll be saved in any case whether I do anything about it or not when they read the apostle under the hand of the Holy Spirit saying chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world when they hear the apostle saying by grace are you saved through faith and not not of yourselves it is the gift of God they then go on to draw this conclusion if it's all from God what can I do about it nothing if you are elect you are elect and you will be saved no matter what and my unbelief is not a sin because saving faith is a gift from heaven you see how do you think that and they say it is written my friend you have to say to the man and you have to say to yourself it is written again except you repent you must all likewise perish it is written again

[15 : 16] God is not willing that any should perish it is written yet again God command all men everywhere to repent take scriptures and look at it in the light of scriptures find its balance and my friend you'll find the harmony of it too these things to our near human logic may seem sharply to contradict one another they do not truth is one whole it cannot ultimately be divided we may see different aspects of it and God may speak to us through different aspects of it but it is one truth you say I don't understand how it can be one truth neither do I the doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility taken in every realm of life like two lions running away out in front of you and they will merge only in infinity infinity and eternity parallel lines given for our guidance let's come on to something else let's come on to our text

Jesus is troubled Greeks come to him on the very eve of Gethsemane and the cross and the coming and the question they ask sir we would see Jesus seems to bring home the reality of the cross to him in a powerful way and he prays and it's as though he was saying what will I ask for will I say father save me from this from this house and then he says but for this cause I come into the world I will say father glorify thy name if it means if it means the cross for me and it does if it means suffering and death and bringing the cup of my people's woe father glorify thy name the father answers this is our particular interest this evening

I have both glorified it and will glorify it again yes he had glorified it already in myriad ways he had glorified it at a wedding in Cana of Galilee for example the glory of Jesus was manifested to the eyes of his disciples at the great side of Lazarus God had already glorified the name of Jesus and he would do it again and his name was never to be more glorious in the eyes of God his father or in the eyes of the last one of his people than it was to be in the death of the cross I will glorify it again that was such of all

I promised to the Lord Jesus it was an assurance of his heart for his heart how often the father had done it he would repeat it it's a promise to you and me as well we live as far as the church of Christ in our land is concerned we live in one of these what I might call downturns we look back over the history of the church in this land or in any land it's come in surging waves there have been times when the blessing of God the tide of God's love has come in and the wave has risen high and multitudes have been caught in its crest and the people of God could number their brothers and sisters in hundreds of thousands they could do it in the city itself and that not so long ago then in the mysterious puttles of God the tide ebbs what's left in the shore seems to our eye often to be nothing but wreckage and rocks and dangers as though the whole church of

Christ will perish but no I will glorify it again I am as sure as I stand in this foot with this evening that God will yet bless our land and that men and women will come to know him as men and women have known him in the past I'm as sure of it as I am sure of the word of God are you sure of it tonight if we're not sure of that that he'll do it again oh my friend when you think of your poor lost fellow sinners thank your God that there's a purpose in his hand and in his mind to glorify the name of Jesus our God can do it again the print book about Kilstein where there was revival and about other corners of our land campers land part of these books should be to reassure us reassure us not only that

[21 : 20] God could do it in the past but he can do it again I have both glorified it and I will glorify it again listen my glory unto glory of my son will I not give to another and when the so-called church of Christ yes and when the people the two people of God in our land humble themselves past them God will do it again there's a sense in which he's doing it all the time of course every sinner that's converted glory to the name of Jesus do you rejoice when you hear of a sinner converted I do I got a phone call yesterday morning that told me of the confession of a girl that I've been painted for now for more than 12 years and I have to confess not with the regularity not with the consistency not with the fervor and often not with the faith that I should have been trained she was one of these difficult cases came forward and professed to be converted and then went away back into the world they're a scourge on us aren't they but God can take them again there have been men who were known as saints men their whole godliness crumbled and we questioned the word of God work of

God in them but God can take them again I will glorify it again do you not rejoice when you hear of confession well my friend you're not very like the angels I was talking to somebody not very long ago and they were telling me they had been preaching and I said what was your text oh he said it was one of my favorite texts the angels rejoicing at sinners repenting it really struck my own heart do I rejoice the way the angels do there is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repents did nobody laugh and rejoice and dance when you were converted my friend nobody laughed or nobody very much laughed and rejoiced and danced when I was converted except my godly old father and he was getting past dancing but dancing did and I danced myself too as I had never danced before and I made no excuse for saying that

I'll say it again I danced the name I was here I was so full of joy I couldn't believe it and I believe it was angels dancing as well angels rejoicing however they rejoice and they rejoice again when God glorifies every sinner that comes into the kingdom is that glorifying of the name of Jesus every saint that's taken home whether they're young or old brought into the Jerusalem above glory to his name what a song there is there and it must be going on continually on I have both glorified it and I will glorify it again and every day my friend you and I benefit from the fact that

God is always glorifying the name of Jesus I have kept the best wine until now as it said at the wedding you and I say that continually when we get new blessings from God a new message fresh revelation of his love what does he say I've got better to show you again I haven't given you yet the wine from the vineyards that are on the sunny hills of heaven wait till you taste that do you think you've seen much of Christ and his love my friend you've only tasted that drop compared to what's to be used yet do you think you've known joy you've only started I have both glorified it and I will glorify it again pointing us on perhaps in this verse not only to added mountains of glory for the name of

Jesus but to continuing revelation of his love to his people repeated proof of insalible grace I will do it again let's go on to Gethsemane you read there at least in Mark and Luke we read about Gethsemane I wonder if he's ever noticed this and Jesus was away again to pray the second time I was just thinking the other day what a blessing it was to myself that Jesus went to pray again when we come away and we feel the poverty of our place I'm not saying that's why he did it when we feel the unbelief that mingles with it when we feel the pain of and we go to pray again that remember the

[27 : 29] Savior did the same thing and it was when he went to pray again and he said nevertheless not my will but thine be done and he is going to pray again seal this acceptance of his cross and his cross my language you will call some mine what did the second prayer cost him it cost him the cross what did it bring you and what did it bring me a two fold declaration of his love as of all his love to the father not my will but lying be done he would obey his father he could do nothing else because he loved his father my friend he loved the father and he loved us as well and not only the father's demand a new salvation and mine was in his eye when he said not my will but lying be done then to move on to something else a fourth thing we've looked at three things already how this word again lights up the use of scripture by

Christ how it lights up the purpose of God for Christ how it lights up the obedience of Christ to the father and how it lights up the reality of his resurrection how does Paul put the basis of his gospel not long since I was talking about it here 1 Corinthians 15 verse 3 I have given unto you that which I first of all receive how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and was buried and rose again according to the scriptures what an again that is it's an again that's pulsing with the power of unendless life and it seems to me that the apostles used it under the

Holy Ghost very deliberately it would have sufficed for Paul to have said he died and was buried and rose from the dead that's not what he said he said he died and he rose again and when he interpreted the fact of his death and resurrection this is how he did it when he was writing to the Romans he said he died for our sins and he rose again for our justification do you see how a simple word like that is so powerful with meaning and vitality that it sets the norm for one of the most wonderful Christian doctrines he is risen again and the again includes not only the prior life but the death which intervened and the burial that he was under the power of death for a time and that he was so long under the power of death that death could not be doubting and that even while he was under the power of death that in accordance with the scriptures he did not see corruption

Psalms 16 he is risen again and in his rising his people have been raised into a new standing before God justified justification took place there of some kind in the forum of eternity when they were raised with him as the apostle says it becomes ours in possession only when we trust and only when we believe of course we are justified through faith in his name who is risen again and he spoke of that resurrection himself very frequently to his disciples I was going to see my concordance looking at the way the spirit uses this word and I was amazed at how frequently Jesus used it in relationship to his suffering and resurrection as it's recorded in the gospel of Matthew alone if I go away if I die

I will rise again this is how we put it as John gives it to us I lay down my life why that I might take it again John doesn't disjoin the two things no more than Jesus I lay down my life that I may take it again I have power to live down and I have power to take it again what a wonderful again that is but let's move on because the word is used not only of Christ but it's used of us too let me I can only instance it now because the time that I was setting myself has really gone here's the word in Old Testament used if a man die shall he live again Job 14 14 there's the question of questions have you really faced it if a man die shall he live again and even

[33 : 51] Job had this answer you need to look it up for yourself but Jesus gave the ultimate answer I am the resurrection and the life he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live and listen he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die yes his body may be separated from his soul but death the second death shall have no power him the man die shall he live again how about it this word when we apply it to the great transaction that must take place in the life of every lost sinner Jesus said it and it's memorable and we can't forget it can we we may dislike it we may not want to think about it but my friend it's there it's there no matter how religious or irreligious we are ye must be born again and that takes your religiosity and your good works and it crumbles them into ash in your mouth and if it doesn't

God help you nothing will save you ye must be born again there must be a work of God which will transform you and change you and alter you so radically that you are as a new man and that's precisely what Peter says a Christian believer is you he says you have been begotten again whom God has begotten again unto our living hope yes he must be born again how about the back sliders how about those who've wandered far away from God is there any hope for them have you ever read second chronicles chapter 33 the story of monasties you'll hardly find among all the hard men that are spoken of in scripture and we've been looking at one of them on sabbath morning joab you'll hardly find a man as cruel and as inhumane inhuman really and as far away from

God as manasseh was and you what's written of manasseh he thought the Lord is God but listen and God brought him again to Jerusalem to his throne to see there again God can reach down and take a man like manasseh in his net and bring him out of the filth and vileness of Babylon and set him on his throne in Jerusalem that's the gospel can God do it for me can he do it for you you're asking can he do a work which makes me again listen Jeremiah 18 the vessel which was made was marred in the hand of the potter and he took it the tree that he was making the vessel off he took it and he made it again another lesson as seemed good to the potter to make my friend this word again when you bring it to apply to the power of

God's grace to save it's full of hope he made it again and almost the last use I want to make of it is this one the night of a feast you never heard such music and you never heard such dancing such glee and mist it's almost tense one to say something but I'll not say it somebody came around and said what's all the jollification about here it was the old father that answered what's all the jollification about here are we not here my son this one this my son was dead and he is alive again do you not catch the thrill of the gospel a prodigal return from the swine trough and from the prostitute and it was

Jesus that used and told the story so we don't make any apology from it he came from the gutters of life crawling back and as he came crawling back his father saw him from a long way off and he said he's alive again when that story comes out of the mouth of God my friend it should give hope to you and hope to me and the very last use of the word that I want to make and you could use it yourself go through and do a profitable bible study on it was this the very last one of the very last words that Jesus used to his disciples was this little word again if I go away I will come again my friend he is coming again he said it and he's coming again to judge the world he's coming to bless his own in a way that they cannot yet believe he is able to bless them and he's coming to adjust the balancing of God's world and so adjust in the iniquity and sin and ungodliness and antichrist will never lift his head again he's coming again he came once in order that men and women could be made again and having gone he returned once more to end the whole thing we don't know when but we do know why it's in doubt wisdom to learn the simple and yet profound theology that's brought to us not one little word again

[41 : 34] I want to finish up in this way my friend will you ever hear the gospel again will God ever come as close to you again if you put off his voice speaking to you tonight if you harden your heart if you close your ears and say not yet Lord I want to ask you this question will he really come again he may God God is very patient I know that from my own experience and I know it from the word of God none of the forbearance and patience of God the man must preach him to you so impatient with you somewhere that you remain unconverted but he can hardly face you again he can hardly keep on praying for you believing me he can hardly shed tears over your shoulders it's been so long only the grace of

God can keep him going but you will be thankful tonight that God does not make a pleasure but remember there is an end even to the forbearance of God and you have no guarantee that the opportunity will come again it may it may not now is the accepted time not again