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Sermon preached by Mr F L Gosden at Galeed Chapel Brighton on Wednesday evening,
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“And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” Hebrews Chapter 6:11-12

Our dear brother was well laid in the grave yesterday and I had a very sacred feeling as they lowered the coffin into the grave, and such a sweet persuasion that he will have that promise fulfilled. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." But we are left behind and it will be a mercy if these solemn occasions are deeply sanctified to us, for the grave is certain for each one of us without exception, there is no partiality in the Lord he is no respect of persons whether it is a monarch upon the throne or the most humble peasant, death is a leveller - it levels everybody. There is no distinction in death except one and that is the distinction that grace makes; O to be thus distinguished. It is said of these Hebrews "They all died in faith." We shall not die in faith if we do not live in faith; there is a very solemn connection between how we live and how we shall die.

Well our dear friend was one who through faith and patience has inherited the promised. Strictly speaking, this life is a land of promise; there are exceeding great and precious promises that are fulfilled to all his people, by everything that pertains to life and godliness, and accompanies salvation. In a very strict sense the promises are reserved for heaven and they will all be incorporated in the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for his people. Let us as enabled look at this important desire of this apostle.

He had care of the churches. These Hebrews were believing Jews and he was very concerned that they should endure to the end and therefore there are the encouragements and exhortations. I do not know quite how many times 'Let us' appears in this epistle but there is something very sweet about it; it shows the concern the apostle had for the spiritual interests of these Hebrews. He does not say 'you,' - 'You - "therefore fear lest a promise being left you of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." But 'let us' - he joins himself with them. 'And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence.'

The same diligence that is recorded in the 11th chapter of this epistle which is like a small book of martyrs, there are martyrs that went to the stake but there are many martyrs that have lived a martyrs life that do not go to the stake. True we do not have to meet in caves and dens of the earth, destitute, afflicted and tormented; what mighty faith these pilgrims had, how should we stand? We have every luxury and comfort in this life and there is a danger, "Lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Which means to say this, that being full and having all we need, we become independent of God and appear as though we have found a rest here below, and the apostle feared this and so he cautioned them expressing this desire. 'That every one of you do show the same diligence.' I feel that Peter sums up what this diligence is in that very important and solemn chapter in his 2nd epistle. "Wherefore beloved seeing that ye look

for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." You may have caught a glimpse of those 'such things' when you were singing the first hymn.

*There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.*

*There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.*

*Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.*

(Gadsby's 1022)

Now these are the 'such things'; such is the nature of the things, they are eternal things, incorruptible things, things that can never decay. "Wherefore beloved seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 'And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence.'

The apostle opens the 12th chapter with an encouragement. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus." Now the cloud of witnesses we have contained in the whole of the word of God. Not only so, but He still has His witnesses here below which are an example and our dear departed brother was one of those witnesses, and example, and an influence. We feel that he was to us, and we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence. Perhaps this word diligence causes us much shame and we must look at it. To go along in an ungracious complacency, satisfied that we know the truth, satisfied that we are Strict Baptists is an evil state of soul.

The wise and foolish virgins are an example and the searching point in that parable is that these were very nearly right; the foolish virgins were virgins they were not corrupt, they were virgins and would hear nothing but the truth. Their lamps were alright, nothing wrong with them at all, nothing wrong with them except they were destitute of life and grace. 'And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence,' as those that have gone before such as are recorded in the 107th Psalm.

How very short we come, but what a mercy it is to live to the honour and glory of God. I do feel that our dear departed brother was eminent in this, he was not a man of words, he had not the gift of conversation but he spoke with his feet. Paul said to the Philippians, "Our conversation is in heaven, and that word 'conversation' intends that our citizenship is in heaven; that the object of our faith and the object of salvation is the glorious Son of God. That is our ultimate home and therefore our conversation, life and actions are under the influence of the fear of God. 'And we desire that every

one of you do show the some diligence.' O the diligence that is put into business! the diligence in going to the market, in buying at the cheapest and selling at the dearest. How does it compare with our souls exercise? 'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence.' It is important as we are drawing near to the grave, the things of this life are apt to swallow up everything; it is a mercy when grace possesses the heart when the gospel of Christ swallows us up.

'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence.' Let us look the thing in the face, in view of eternity; the second greatest gift is the Word of God. The unspeakable and greatest gift is His Son, but this is the second. "The written and incarnate word, in all things is the same." But let us examine ourselves, how much diligence have you exercised in the Word of God this week? How have we read it, has it read us? We shall be judged by it. These things have come very close to me in the death and losses we have suffered. I thought to myself in going away from the grave yesterday, I am continually carrying people to grave and it won't be very long before someone will have to carry you and to our graves. 'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence.' He sets a standard of that diligence. 'Every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.' It is a very solemn thing to be almost a Christian. If a sinking man misses a lifebelt by an inch he is gone, and there was one you know in the scripture. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Almost is fatal. 'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. Not nearly to the end! O my friends that is a solemn word in the 24th of Matthew. "He that shall endure unto the end the same shall be saved." You can reverse that word and it still contains its force. "They that shall be saved shall endure unto the end." Therefore it shows the importance of being diligent to make your calling and election sure, to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

Well you may say it is a very high standard but it is the standard of the word of God. I do feel that we should be very careful when we say things are too high for us to reach. You want to examine that, why you say it, there is no standard in the scripture that faith cannot attain to. We must look at the word in the 12th verse, 'That ye be not slothful.' We may be so taken up in the responsibilities, duties, cares, business of this world, that we have no time nor inclination to make our calling or our election sure. It is very solemn when the things of eternity are far away and the things of this world are near to us. Now this, full assurance of hope: we will look at it, because I do feel sympathy with any here who say sadly 'I do not feel to have faith; to say nothing of full assurance of it.' But are you satisfied? Can you just fold your arms and say well, 'I cannot do anything of myself.' Let us look at what this full assurance is; there may be a full assurance of what I call, objectively, in a negative sense. As for instance, some of you who are truly exercised in your soul can you not say that you have a full assurance of hope as to the ability of Christ? The leper had; "If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean." Have you that assurance, not in yourself but what you believe Christ can do. You are fully assured of it.

Are you fully assured that His precious blood could pardon your sins? Are you fully assured that its virtue is such that it could take out the deep dyed stains of your sins? Well it is a wonderful thing to be fully assured of the ability of God in Christ, in the gospel. Now I will say this; this full assurance is a measure of faith, you must believe in Him to be assured of His ability, of the sufficiency of His fullness of the power of His grace. You must know Him to believe that. But you' cannot live on negatives. If this is the work of the Spirit you will never be satisfied until you are brought into the text.

To receive the end of faith, even the salvation of your soul, the full assurance of hope is for the gospel to come into your heart, not in word only, nor ink and paper, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance, and this work of the spirit and that full assurance will be that the Lord will be made unto you and in you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Everything you can possibly need; He must do it all, He possesses it all, and that will suit the poor destitute sinner who needs it all. I would not encourage slothfulness, but I would say this to any poor sinner; you may feel that your religion is just like this, you have nothing, but, you want everything. If you are there, it is a beginning of a work of grace in your heart. 'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.'

There is something very blessed to my mind in this exhortation. Oh the apostle was jealous for these Hebrews; he did not want them to stop short. My friends, we shall have to let everything else go. We may have been favoured in providence with prosperity, and may have a fortune, but it is earth to earth, ashes to ashes and dust to dust. True, we may put a notice in the paper that we have left some thousands of pounds, left it! But if we have grace according to this, "Who through faith and patience have inherited the promises", we shall have true riches and righteousness, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Not houses or land but an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. And that will strengthen faith to press on. O there is a sweet majestic simplicity in the gospel, very profound, in this simple word. "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for you treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." And this is to be diligent to the full assurance of hope, but says Paul we are saved by hope; this comes through the spirit by the Holy Scriptures. The security of it, we have in the end of this very chapter "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

Now this hope is a grace of the spirit, it is not a development of some natural faculty. We shall never have a good hope through grace unless we are born again. All we can boast till Christ we know is vanity - do you believe it? What do you think of these things my friends? O I do look at the congregation and feel a love to your souls. There is something very blessed in the consideration of our latter end. I had a glance through the writings that our dear friend has left, and we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. It is only the Lord that can give us this full assurance; when He brings it into the heart it is very simple, but very profound, and we shall need this hope to be revived from time to time. It will be exceedingly tried, you will prove that living things cannot die, but a death will come on living things and you will know what it is to walk in darkness and the shadow of death. But O the demonstration of the spirit, you may come into chapel staggering like a drunken man and the Lord so bring the mercy, love and righteousness of the Lord Jesus into your heart that you will go out singing.

*Yes I to the end shall endure,
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven.
(Gadsby's 340)*

That is it! The full assurance of hope and you will say, I shall get to heaven after all, and when some of His poor people are brought right down into the depths and look at this they feel they must look for hell, but as one of old said. "I looked for hell, He gave me heaven." And when He comes, then how we have a full assurance of hope unto the end. And O how this hope does support in affliction, we shall sing. I am thankful to have seen it in many of our afflicted people and many of them have been able to say out of experience "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

O the presence of the Lord will give you this full assurance of hope,' - may you never be satisfied without it. 'We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.' It is to have the witness of the spirit, that we are complete in Christ. That word to the Colossians is a most blessed word, I have thought, and sometimes said, that if the blessed spirit should whisper in my ear, on dying day. "Ye are complete in Him", I would die in the Lord and die in peace.

Well, this is the thing; it will be a full assurance of hope unto the end. And then He goes on further, 'that ye be not slothful.' He would not have given this exhortation to those godly Jews if there was no fear of them being slothful; but consider the church of Laodicea, they were in a slothful condition and the Lord rebuked them, they were neither hot nor cold, and the Lord desired that they would be either cold or hot. "So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." A lukewarm condition is an abomination to the Lord. To maintain an external religion so that there is nothing different that anyone can see in you is not difficult; but you are stale. It is a burden to read the word of God, prayer is a formality, and to come to services is a task. 'That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' Another word comes to me and that is how I have to speak about it. "Brethren be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Now this is a responsibility of a profession of Christ: "Followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises."

Now, is your life in such conformity to the gospel, that others could follow you as an ensample? I know these points are close, but they are close in the text and I would not by-pass them for anything. But there is a blessedness in it my friends, O, the apostle here is urging these Hebrews to a final perseverance and I believe they are to create an influence which the Spirit will bring to bear upon a pilgrim, to help him over the obstacles. In the first place He will give them to prove with Solomon that in this world there is nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit. I do feel that the book of Ecclesiastes is not read sufficiently and diligently. Solomon was in the position to have everything; some of you may be, but he had the grace of God in his heart and he sought a better country, better kind of riches and a better kind of pleasures. That is one thing that will bring this persuasion into your heart.

The 17th chapter of John is a most sacred prayer "Father I will that they also whom thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." If we are not inside of that prayer, then we are undone to all eternity. When he prayed that prayer He prayed for the whole election of grace, every individual to the end of time without exception. Blessed prayer! It needs faith and patience,

faith is not a natural grace, but is given of God. "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise."

Well we must leave it. I do feel that our dear departed brother was such an influence and example. How short we come but I do desire that everyone of us may show the same diligence right unto the end, that we be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and inherit the promises.

Amen.