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Sermon preached by Mr. F. L. Gosden at Galeed Chapel, Brighton,
Sunday evening 10th November 1963.

"Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day; for it was about the tenth hour." John 5:38-39

This word is intimately connected with the subject that we were considering this morning: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." (Colossians 2:6) We have here one of the almost innumerable examples of walking in the Lord as He is received or believed in.

John introduced the Lord Jesus. He was His forerunner; and he had been speaking to the people concerning Christ. Beautiful chapter this is and it shows the eternity, the eternal generation of the Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It speaks of His universal sovereignty. "All things were made by Him, without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men." But even so, He came to His own and His own rejected Him.

"But the next day, John seeth Jesus coming unto Him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Two disciples, when they heard John speak, followed Jesus. 'Jesus turned and saw them following.' If it was written, Then Jesus said unto them, what seek ye? it would not have altered the sense, and, therefore, I think that there is a reason for this word, 'Jesus turned and saw them following,' because there was no need for Jesus to turn at all. He knew them, as we tried to speak last Wednesday: "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." Perfect knowledge. A knowledge of every individual, and O how particular and intimate is that knowledge as David saw it and felt it in the 139th Psalm! "Thou seest my downsittings and uprising, Thou knowest my thoughts afar off, for there is no word in my tongue but lo, Thou knowest it altogether." He knew these two disciples and loved them. There was no need for Him to turn and see them following. But this is spoken to encourage seeking souls, for the Lord immediately said unto them, 'What seek ye?' He knew; and that may be the case of some here who are seeking Him. O for the Lord, as it were to turn, and you will know what I mean, if He would turn by the Holy Spirit in the ministry and speak to you in particular and say unto you 'What seek ye?'

I do feel that if we are led by the Spirit to take notice of some of the simple utterances of the Word of God, we shall find much teaching and encouragement in them. The two disciples heard John speak and it had an effect upon them, they followed "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, but how can they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach except they be sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of Him upon the mountains that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth peace that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." "And as many as were ordained unto eternal life, believed." - They will! Every one of them will believe that are ordained unto eternal life. It is very remarkable, but I think in the last chapter of the Acts, after all the work of the Apostles is established with the Churches and their preaching, it says this: "Some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed them not;" and so it will be. But here we have these two disciples that heard John speak and faith was mixed with what they heard and you may depend upon it, the word entered into their hearts; and the entrance of that word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple! O what a volume, what eternal blessedness enters into the heart by the Holy Ghost when the eyes are

opened! When the Holy Spirit quickens a soul into eternal life there is a revelation of Emmanuel in all the fullness of everything that a sinner can possibly need through his pilgrimage and that fullness in Him, in whom is all the fullness of Deity and divine sovereignty and immutability and eternity! And this entered into the hearts of these disciples, little by little and this is what is done when one receives Christ Jesus the Lord.

O, what a reception it is! It comes to my mind like this. When Adam fell, all the floodgates of sin and iniquity were opened, and that once blessed person, created in sinless innocence, was filled with iniquity, filth, vice, unbelief and enmity and death flowed into his being. But when through the Lord Jesus the blessed Spirit opens the heart, then there is a greater flood of living water flows into the soul and as sin's dire contagion fills the veins and spreads its poison to the heart - so when one is quickened into divine life and brought into union with God's eternal Son, the sacred living virtue of Christ fill 'the veins, and spreads its blessings, its life, to the very heart. O, we have said many times - and I will say it as long as I have breath, there is more in Christ of salvation, of holiness, of righteousness, of heaven, than there is in a sinner of sin and death and darkness and ruin and hell .

Well, these two disciples believed it, do you? That is to say, they received the Lord Jesus. Do you receive the things the gospel reveals and which we feebly attempt to preach? Are they suitable to you? Do they meet a case? Do you see that if Christ would come to you it would be life coming to your death? When you behold His glory, His divine beauty; then if He would condescend to come it would be His beauty coming to your deformity - and do you long for Him to come?

Well, these two disciples received Him, they believed the report. Somewhere in the gospel the Lord uses the illustration of the Queen of Sheba that she had put the people to shame, for when she heard the fame of Solomon she came from the utmost parts of the earth. She not only heard it and said , 'Well, he must be a very wonderful man, he must have a very wonderful mansion,' and say no more about it; but she came - came to see it for herself, came to prove him. Have you as much religion as she had? Do you believe the report of the gospel? Has it ever moved you to come to Him in secret and to prove Him? It honours Him when poor sinners come to prove Him and ask Him to demonstrate that His grace is greater than their sins, to ask Him to demonstrate His divine power to deliver, and His precious blood to cleanse and heal.

They heard John speak and it had this effect upon them - they followed Him. Paul concludes that weighty Epistle to the Hebrews with this exhortation; "Let us therefore, go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." As much as to say, if all that I have declared to you concerning this glorious person, who is the express image of His Father and the brightness of His glory; He who is the Prince of Glory and He whose offices I have made known to you, His sacrifice; if it comes to less than this "Go forth unto Him without the camp", then my preaching has been in vain. Nothing short of this my friends, "Let us go forth unto Him without the camp." You think of it, with all our preaching and all your hearing, if we come to the end and have never attained unto this, to go forth unto Him of whom you have heard. O to feel His invincible, drawing attraction

'Then Jesus turned and saw them following.' I wonder if the Lord has seen anybody here following? Well, perhaps you might give the answer to the Lord's question. What would you say if He turned and saw you following and asked you 'What seek ye?' What would you say to Him? I believe a hymn would give a real honest answer in many cases;

*I seek and hope to find,
A portion for my soul
To heal a feverish mind
And make a bankrupt whole. (Gadsby's 886)*

'O, its my soul. I have not come to seek anything for my body, nor for my business, nor at this time for my family, but a portion for my soul.' And why do you seek it? Ah, you see the suitability there! You see the two things we tried to unfold this morning. There is a feverish mind and there is a bankrupt; and there is such as seek and hope to find a portion all divine. Can you say?

*Come and claim us as Thy portion,
And let us lay claim to Thee?*

(Gadsby's 610)

Some of you would answer the Lord's enquiry 'What seek ye?' and you would say 'Lord, visit me with Thy salvation. It is salvation that I seek. A salvation that is full and free. I seek that salvation that Thou hast wrought out Thyself, in Thy person and work. That it might be wrought out in my experience by the Holy Spirit. That is what I seek.'

Some of you may be seeking the Holy Ghost and realise that without Him, His regenerating grace, His heavenly in-shining with a true light, without Him you are dead and in darkness. O, how essential is the Holy Spirit! Paul - in the Acts of the Apostles asks this question; "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" A very pertinent question. We may well ask it of ourselves. You might say, Well, can there be a believing without the Holy Ghost? Yes. There is a reception of the truth in the brain. There are plenty of people may believe it mentally, nominally, without the Holy Ghost. Indeed the devils believe and tremble. But says Paul to the Hebrews; "We are not of those that draw back unto perdition;" and you may depend upon it, if there is a believing without the Holy Ghost, there will be a drawing back sooner or later; But not of them which believe to the saving of the soul.

'What seek ye?' Some of you may be seeking the pardon of your sins and this is preached; "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man" - it is all through this Man, the fullness is in Him, all that pertains to life and godliness is in Him - "that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." It is the greatest blessing that can be bestowed upon a sinner. It contains every blessing of the gospel without exception. The forgiveness of sins contains the whole gospel, the whole of the person and finished work of the Redeemer. It contains the whole of His sacred sufferings. It contains the whole of His sin-atonement sacrifice upon the cross. O the greatness of divine pardon! No unpardoned sinner will ever go to heaven. Some of you may feel, 'Well, I do hope the Lord has done many things for me, but I really cannot honestly say that He has said to me, Thy sins which are many are all forgiven.' I can tell you this, if you are seeking for the pardon of your sins and the Lord has done anything at all for you, you will not die until your sins are forgiven. No; the life of a child of God is immortal until his sins are forgiven; and if the Lord has done anything at all for you in the way of grace, He will do everything. He may not have completed everything yet, but "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it" - or perfect it - "unto the day of Jesus Christ."

'What seek ye?' - The forgiveness of your sins? He may ask another and you may say 'Show me a token, Lord, for good. O I do seek a real, a sure token, for good.' Well, how does He give a token? What is a token? You take the prodigal; he was compelled to go back to the Father's house. Yes, he received him when he was brought to beggary and want and nakedness and hunger. "I will arise and go to my father."

*Few, if any, come to Jesus,
Till reduced to self-despair.*

(Gadsby's 396)

It would seem from the Word of God that the Lord Himself too delights in extremities; Seems to delight, to magnify the power of His grace and His infinite wisdom by bringing His people to an extremity.

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father; I have sinned ...and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But this was the thing, the token - the father immediately brought forth tokens for good, brought forth the best robe - and showed it to him? No! he put it on him. O, seeking soul that believes in the righteousness of Christ, believes that it would justify you, believes that the beauty of the Lord your God would be upon you if He would turn, even under the ministry, and see you following; and you should say 'Lord, do grant Thy righteousness may fill my heart and bring justification and pardon to my soul. A token for good but he brought another token. Bring forth the ring - and show it to him? No! put it on his finger, and what is that a token of? Why, a ring has neither beginning nor end, it is a token of everlasting love. 'What seek ye?' a token for good? Shoes on his feet. What shoes? shoes of iron and brass. What are the iron and brass? Those shoes that enable a poor pilgrim to walk over rough and thorny ground. Why, it is the preparation of the gospel, the exceeding great and precious promises the eternal decrees of Jehovah in the covenant of grace.

'Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, What seek ye?' You may be seeking deliverance. O my friends, the power of indwelling sin, together with the fiery darts of temptation from the devil, may have brought you into captivity and broken your bones. You look what David was seeking; he was seeking for pardon and restoration that the bones which God had broken may rejoice. It is deliverance. You may be in some kind of captivity - captivity in your soul, walking in darkness and have no light. Well, there is fullness in Him for everything that you can possibly need, every exigency which you may meet with; every difficulty, every enemy, every calamity, every disease. O the fullness that there is in Christ Jesus! "To whom coming" O to feel that inexpressible, mysterious attraction in Christ drawing you under all circumstances from all places and all conditions unto Himself, as faith sees in Him a sufficiency, a divine ability, omnipotent power, infinite wisdom, unsearchable riches. 'What seek ye?' because everything that you seek is in Me.

'Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto Him, Master, where dwellest Thou?' and that gave the secret of their hearts. It does remind us of the Church in Solomon's Song, 'What seek ye?' 'Lord, where dwellest Thou?' "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth." Do you? Do you love Him, sinner? Some of these questions may be asked in your soul in the middle of the night. "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou causest Thy flocks to rest at noon? If thou know not, O thou fairest among women," But says a poor sinner, that is not me. You would not say so, but the Lord does. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob nor seen perverseness in Israel." "thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee;" and that is the real condition of everyone whom the Lord has redeemed every one of His people. "If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

Where dwellest Thou, Lord? That is where I would go, for I long for communion with the Lord. "O that I knew the secret place where I might find my God." Are these things - have these things any place in your experience? How blessed it is when they are uppermost and things of less importance are secondary. The things of this life are very important; great responsibilities devolve upon us in our several positions in life, but when we come to the sanctuary we are concerned with things of eternity, of the soul, of the kingdom of heaven.

Lord, where dwellest Thou? What would some of you give this evening if the Lord should say unto you, 'Come and see.' Take you by the hand of faith, by His Spirit and direct you to the secret place of the Most High. 'He saith unto them, Come and see.' Therefore, we would as helped speak of some of the places where He dwells; and O that He might cause the invitation to reach our hearts. He

loves seekers; they will be finders, they must; because His word declares, "'Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

The real secret place of the Most High where He dwells is in the bosom of the Father, but He manifests Himself to His people upon the earth and, therefore, we would trace some of the places where He has been and can yet be seen by faith. 'Come and see.'

The first place we would mention is in the manger. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Perhaps some of you have gone to that manger and believed what we sing;

*His shoulders held up heaven and earth,
When Mary held up Him.*

(Gadsby's 709)

'Come and see.' Do you think Simeon was glad to see Him there? He saw in Him his Saviour: "Then took he Him up in his arms, saying, Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." 'Come and see' the infinite God contracted to a span, the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. Come and see Him by faith, and as we said this morning, there will be a reception of Him in every part of His work and the Holy Spirit unites His people and joins them unto Christ in every particular of the work of salvation.

You look at those which would be good companions to these two disciples; "They shall ask their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, "Come let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." They were seeking souls, so from the very manger, all the way through His life, He was seen of man and preached unto the Gentiles. Many saw Him and saw Him but "as a root out of a dry ground; no form nor comeliness," no beauty in Him. But says John, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So He dwells in the Word of God. When you open the Scriptures, it is good advice that Hart gives; "Join prayer with each inspection." Have you ever found the Lord there?

'Come and see.' O to have the eyes opened in coming to seek Him in the Holy Scriptures and to pray with David, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." And you will love Him in His Word. You will love Him in the 53rd Isaiah. Come and see Him there. We need to remove the shoes from off our feet when we come to Calvary, for the place is holy ground! Have you ever, even if in a small measure surveyed the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died? And have you realised what He was doing there? I know His death is spoken of as a passive death, and we understand the expression; but really it was an active death. See what He was doing when he hung there upon the cross the reproach He was enduring, 'the curse of God when there He was made sin, offering the sacrifice of Himself, He having the sins of the whole election of grace laid upon His sacred head. Our sin; but He, in Himself, in His own body, bore our sins away. There, where He was casting all the sins of all His people into the depths of the sea of His precious blood. 'Come and see.' 'Lord, where dwellest Thou?' And to hear His victorious cry, for it was a cry of victory; "It is finished." O, my friends, and that bowed head! It would be incomplete to consider it without that. He bowed His sacred head. O that bow!

Come and see: He bowed His sacred head in obedience to the law; and when He gave His soul an offering for sin," He saw His seed," and when He hung upon the cross He saw everyone of His people individually. He saw and recognised those for whom He died when upon the cross; and for you He bowed His head in obedience to the law. If a sight of those sacred eyes which bowed and closed in death reaches your heart, you would join with these disciples and follow Him, saying, 'Lord, where dwellest Thou.' And He cried, "It is finished. It is finished". No one will ever be able to express the blessedness, the importance, the authority of that victorious cry. Nothing has ever been added

to that finished work since. Not all the work of the Holy Ghost in the soul adds one iota to that finished work. It was done. Not all your experience, all your prayers, add, anything to that finished work; and if we, according as we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, had an interest in that mighty Amen, the greatest Amen that ever sounded, "It is finished", then my friends, it was finished: Our salvation was finished before we were born; and if we had not an interest in that cry, then we shall never experience anything of the work of the Holy Ghost in our hearts.

Well, may the Lord join the two texts together: "As ye have therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" 'Then Jesus turned, 'and saw them that received Him, walking in Him by following Him - that is how they walked in Him - 'and saith, What seek ye? they said unto Him, Master, where dwellest Thou? He said unto them, come and see.' And finally - He dwells in heaven, and He dwells there to bring His people there! "Ye are complete in Him." He entered heaven with His own precious blood, and His people will enter there by the same precious blood. O for this blessed word to so take us in as to issue in eternal glory! To die, my friends, with this enquiry, 'Where dwellest Thou?' and for the Lord to say to a dying saint, 'Come and see.' Then this will be true: "Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" It is they who receive Him, and as they received Him, walked in Him; and as they walked in Him they followed Him; and now the Lord has an answer to His prayer, "Father, I will that all those whom hast given Me, be with me where I am, that they may behold My glory."

Amen.